the weekly Standard

MAY 29, 2000 $3.95

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The Collapse of Zionism

BY CHARLES KRAUTHAMMER

PLUS

Elián as Propaganda — CHRISTOPHER CALDWELL
"Rational Suicide" — WESLEY J. SMITH
Al Gore's Rewrite — DEBRA J. SAUNDERS

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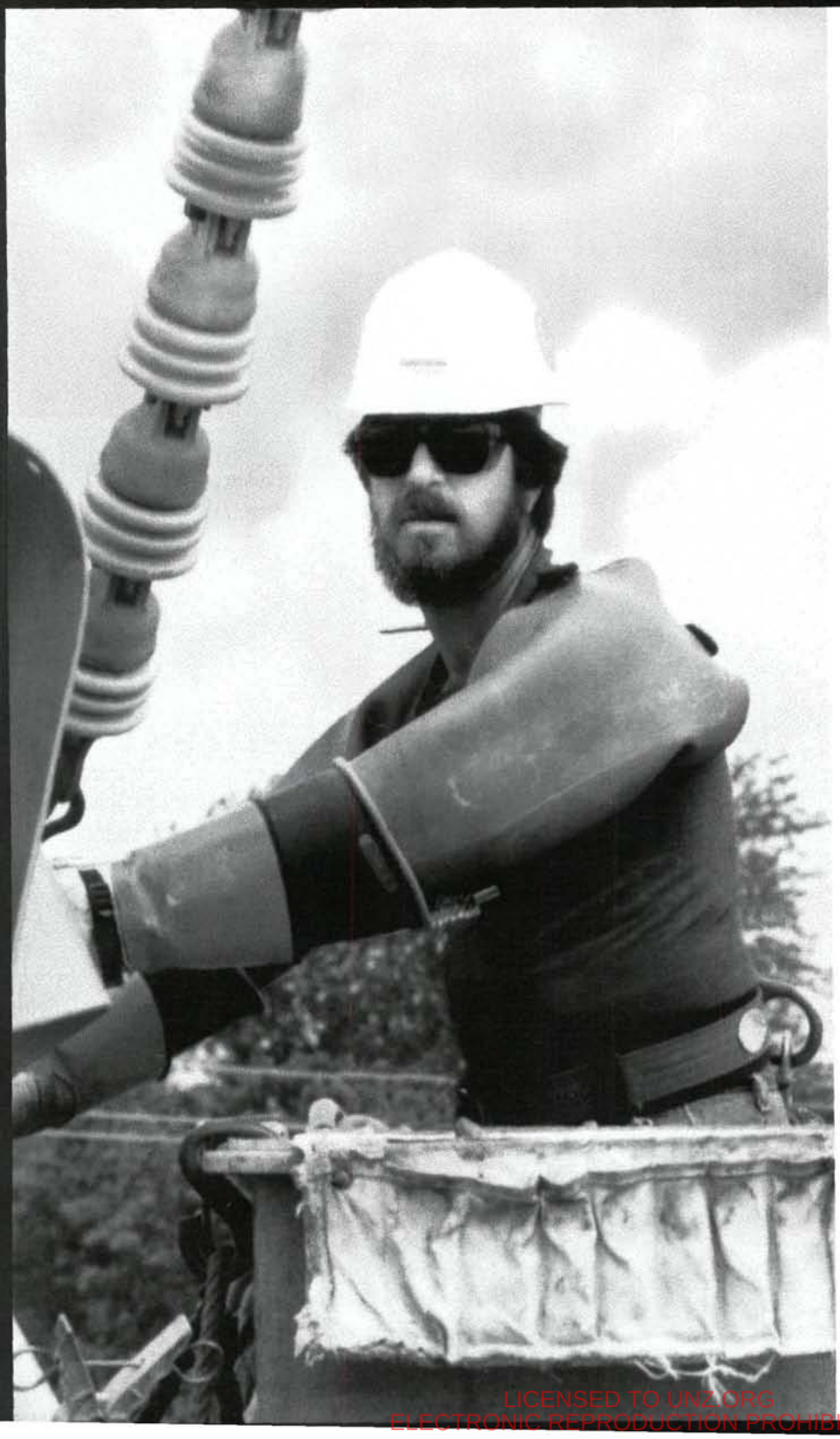
What do I think about electric reliability?

"New technologies run on electricity. Half of all American households have a computer, the economy is booming, and we have a growing need to move electricity from power plants to people. The only real way to meet the demand is to expand the electric system."



To keep electricity flowing reliably, we need the right mix of market solutions and government oversight. Congress and policy makers should take steps that will bring long-term improvements to our electric system. Let's:

- Recognize that we need new transmission lines to get power to people. Everyone needs to work together to resolve critical transmission planning and siting issues, develop new technologies, and enhance utility and electrical worker training and skills.
- Promote policies that will stimulate investments in transmission facilities.
- Follow a voluntary and flexible approach to form regional transmission organizations that increase the efficient use of the system.
- Change the North American Electric Reliability Council into a self-regulating reliability organization, under FERC, that can enforce reliability rules on all transmission operators and users.

We are already working on improvements to help meet the growing demand for electricity. Let's make sure we all take the right steps to improve the electric system.

EDISON ELECTRIC INSTITUTE

www.eei.org/issues

Let's consider the facts, not the sound bites.

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the weekly Standard

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Catholics, Abortion, and Bush's Veep

Last Thursday, George W. Bush sent a semi-public letter to 450 Republican leaders around the country, the ostensible purpose of which was to solicit advice about a running mate. But it turns out Bush already knows for sure whom he'd most like to choose: Colin Powell. Trouble is, Bush also knows for sure—or thinks he does—that Powell won't cooperate. The two men are scheduled to meet this week. Bush probably won't twist Powell's arm too hard.

Last week, speaking privately to a group of Catholic Republicans in the Texas governor's mansion, Bush said he thought a Bush-Powell ticket would win 60 percent of the vote and change the face of American politics. Bush also said he understands that Powell's oft-repeated refusal to be considered is sincere and immutable.

Interestingly, Bush told these Catholics that he was well aware of Powell's pro-choice views on abortion, but would pick him nevertheless—if he could. More interesting still, the governor's audience raised no objection to this news, even though one person in attendance had earlier advised Bush that any veep choice who wasn't pro-life would spark protests from the nation's Catholic bishops.

Participants in last week's meeting recommended two other possible vice presidential picks to Bush, both of them pro-life Catholics: Senator Connie Mack of Florida and Governor Frank Keating of Oklahoma. Of Mack, at least, Bush is reported to have said "good man." Unfortunately, Mack has been almost as insistent as Powell that he doesn't want to be tapped. What about John Kasich, chairman of the House Budget Committee? Bush asked his Catholic friends whether it was true that Kasich had left their church. Yes, they replied, it was—and, yes, that might be a problem for Catholic voters.

It's all so complicated, this religion business. But not, apparently, for Vice President Al Gore. Before he said goodbye last week, Bush told his visitors that he had been seated near Gore at the late Cardinal O'Connor's funeral in New York. He had "passed the peace" to Gore, Bush remembered—this a traditional Christian greeting and transfer of good wishes. But, Bush went on, Gore hadn't seemed to "receive it." ♦

May 6, 2000

Dear Classmates:

We were very impressed with the calm dignity, dedication to the rule of law and, ultimately, the gratifying resolution which our classmate, Attorney-General Janet Reno, brought to the Elian Gonzalez custody matter.

We feel it would be appropriate to show our support for her superb professionalism by making a special class contribution to the Law School, in her honor.

If you would like to participate please remit a check, for whatever you'd like to contribute, made out to Harvard Law School, to one of the undersigned. We will amass everything that comes in by June 12th and send it on, specified as to fund scholarships for first year students, at that time.

We look forward to hearing that you, too, would like to applaud the Attorney-General in this tangible way.

Sincerely,

Paul Felzen
Fourth Floor
545 Madison Avenue
New York, NY 10022
(212) 751 5822

Elliott Abramson
721 Biltmore Way
Coral Gables, FL 33134
(305) 445 6007

Letter of the Week

To the left is reproduced an actual fund-raising appeal made to actual graduates of Harvard Law School on behalf of an actual tribute planned for the nation's actual attorney general, Janet Reno. They will call it the Che Guevara Young Pioneer Scholarship, we trust. ♦

Exit Giuliani, Enter Lazio

Representative Rick Lazio lacks the stature of New York mayor Rudy Giuliani, but he may have a slightly better chance of beating Hillary Rodham Clinton in the New York Senate race. No, really.

It's true that over the next month or two, Lazio's basic task will be pre-

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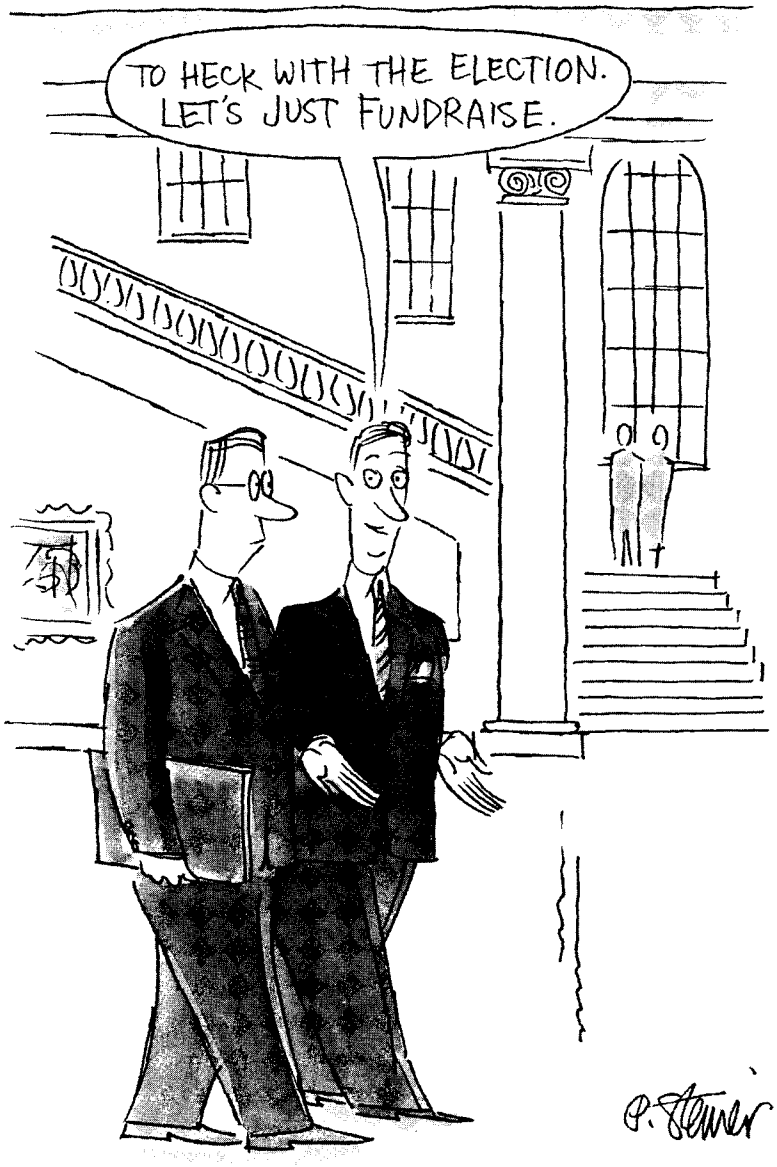

venting the Hillary crowd from defining him as a reincarnation of Newt Gingrich, never popular in New York. And it's true that won't be easy: Lazio voted for the Contract With America and for Newt as speaker.

But Lazio has advantages Giuliani didn't. He's neither a staunch conservative nor pro-life, but his opposition to partial birth abortion means he'll get both the Republican and Conservative party nominations. Giuliani famously feuded with Mike Long, the Conservative chairman, refused to retract his endorsement of President Clinton's partial-birth-ban veto, and consequently never had a prayer of securing the Conservative ballot line. Since 1974, no Republican has won statewide in New York without it.

What's more, odd but true, Lazio may actually benefit from being more obscure than Rudy. The campaign is now certain to be primarily about Hillary. And the more folks focus on the first lady, the less they like her. A few weeks ago, pollster John Zogby measured Hillary against six potential Republican candidates. Only 37 percent voted for Hillary in all six matchups, while 44 percent voted against her every time. In other words, those determined to vote against her in all circumstances outnumber her core supporters. And even when she's pitted against candidates most of the public has never heard of, Hillary doesn't get more than 50 percent.

So Lazio may be good news for conservatives who fear the ultimate nightmare: Hillary wins, Bush wins but the economy collapses in a recession, and Hillary is elected president in 2004 on the promise of bringing back the golden years she and her husband bestowed on America in the 1990s. ♦

Book Note

Pop quiz. Who said the following?

> The Nation is in a bad way if there is no real home, if the family is not of the right kind; if the man is not a good husband and father, if he is brutal or cowardly or selfish, if the woman has lost her sense of duty, if she is sunk in vapid self-indulgence or has let her nature be twisted so that she prefers sterile pseudo-intellectuality to that great and beautiful development of character which comes only to those whose lives know the fullness of duty done, or effort made and self-sacrifice undergone.

That would be Theodore Roosevelt, and it is one among many fabulous selections included in political scientist Waller R. Newell's anthology *What Is a Man? 3,000 Years of Wisdom on the Art of Manly Virtue*—newly published by ReganBooks. THE SCRAPBOOK is pleased to note that this 800-page volume had its birth in Newell's August 3, 1998, WEEKLY STANDARD essay, "The Crisis of Manliness." But all congratulations are due to him alone. ♦

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Casual

Goodbye, Cool World

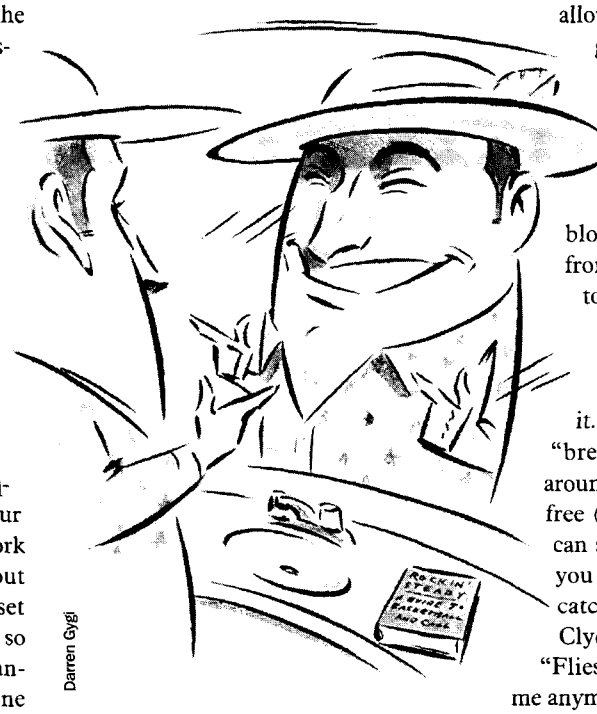
When contemplating all the perks journalism offers, I'm ashamed to complain. Free books, plentiful office supplies, and throngs of eager groupies are but a few of the spoils that come from working at a modest-circulation political opinion magazine. Still, choosing one lifestyle necessitates forgoing others, and sometimes I wonder what I'm missing.

Throughout childhood, my chief concern was how, as an adult, I'd juggle the demands of being a multi-sport professional athlete. The dream, however, was dashed when an astute basketball coach noted that the only way I'd ever be able to drive to my left was with sawhorse barricades and a police escort. He finally persuaded me to relinquish my ambitions, draping his arm around my shoulder and admonishing, as a father to a son, "Labash, trust me, you suck."

Thanks to resilience and financial straits, I bounced back some years later to pursue an exciting career in telemarketing. Since the job's only requisite was the ability to show up for four hours a day and dial a phone, it was work for which I was well-suited. But about three weeks after I started, burnout set in. The quota-filling environment was so Darwinian, only two co-workers managed to thrive under the pressure. One was a man called The Judge, a heroin addict with half his teeth who *really* needed the job. The other was Phil, a rotgut alcoholic. Whenever you adopted Phil's thuggish approach and succeeded in, say, forcing a discount muffler on a woman too old to drive, he would take you out to the parking lot on a smoke break and give you a celebratory swig of his ripple.

Eventually, I stumbled into this life of bylines, exotic travel, and the Pulitzer nominations that have become synonymous with my name. Still, when I'm sitting around with my staid media colleagues in our Casual Friday dorkwear, I sometimes wonder what would have happened if I'd had the courage to surrender to the primal urge that welled when I first saw the 1971 blaxploitation classic *Sweet Sweetback's Baadasssss Song*—perhaps the best pimp film ever made.

Not that I condone prostitution. Nor do I wish to backhand uncooperative employees or chew toothpicks in between meals. Instead I speak of pimping as a state of mind. It's an outsized view of the world that requires bold élan, whether standing down one's street corner or wearing goldfish in the heels of one's boots. It is why, even in tony Upper East Side prep schools, calling someone a "pimp" has become a compliment, and why Pimp Chic, say my spies in Milan, has dominated the catwalks this spring.



Darren Gygi

I was reintroduced to the Pimp Chic ethos a few months ago, while researching a story on Bill Bradley. Though Bradley, as an NBA player, used to "dress like Harpo Marx," according to his former New York Knicks teammate Walt "Clyde" Frazier, the sartorially sublime Clyde embodied a wide-brimmed, open-shirted elegance that hasn't been replicated since. Fortunately, Clyde distilled his aesthetic in an unjustly neglected 1974 book, *Rockin' Steady, A Guide to Basketball & Cool*.

On the first page, Frazier quotes another Walt, with the assertion "I celebrate myself." (Among Pimp Chicsters and epic poets, there's little room for modesty.) In a chapter simply entitled "Cool," Clyde relates sneaker-cleaning techniques, and how as a boy, after following said techniques, "I dug looking down and watching me walk in them." Cool is not just about the Rolls-Royce and black Ranch mink coat (both of which Clyde owns). It is about possessing the icewater circulatory system that allows one to nab a falling cocktail glass in midair without spilling a drop. "It's just instinct," explains Clyde. "It's nothing you can practice. A natural cool. Cool is my style."

The book is also chock-a-block with helpful grooming tips, from patting down one's "'burns" to mashing down one's "'stache" until one can look in the mirror and say, with full confidence, "Yeah Clyde, you've got it." There's also helpful advice on "bread" (keep a million dollars around in "cold cash"), staying drug-free ("I don't need grass, because I can sky on myself"), food ("No way you can be cool and be fat"), and catching flies barehanded (though Clyde's reputation precedes him—"Flies won't come within ten feet of me anymore"). When it comes to "vines" (or clothes), Clyde leads by example, giving a complete inventory of his closet, including everything from his velour "lids" (hats), to his green calfskin suit with poncho and silver studs, to his 50 pairs of kicks ("Colors: groovy").

Most important, Clyde instructs, "Don't look back." It's sage advice. In fact, looking back on my telemarketing days, if Clyde had pimp-rolled through our office, Phil would have taken him to the parking lot and rewarded him with a slug of ripple.

Matt Labash

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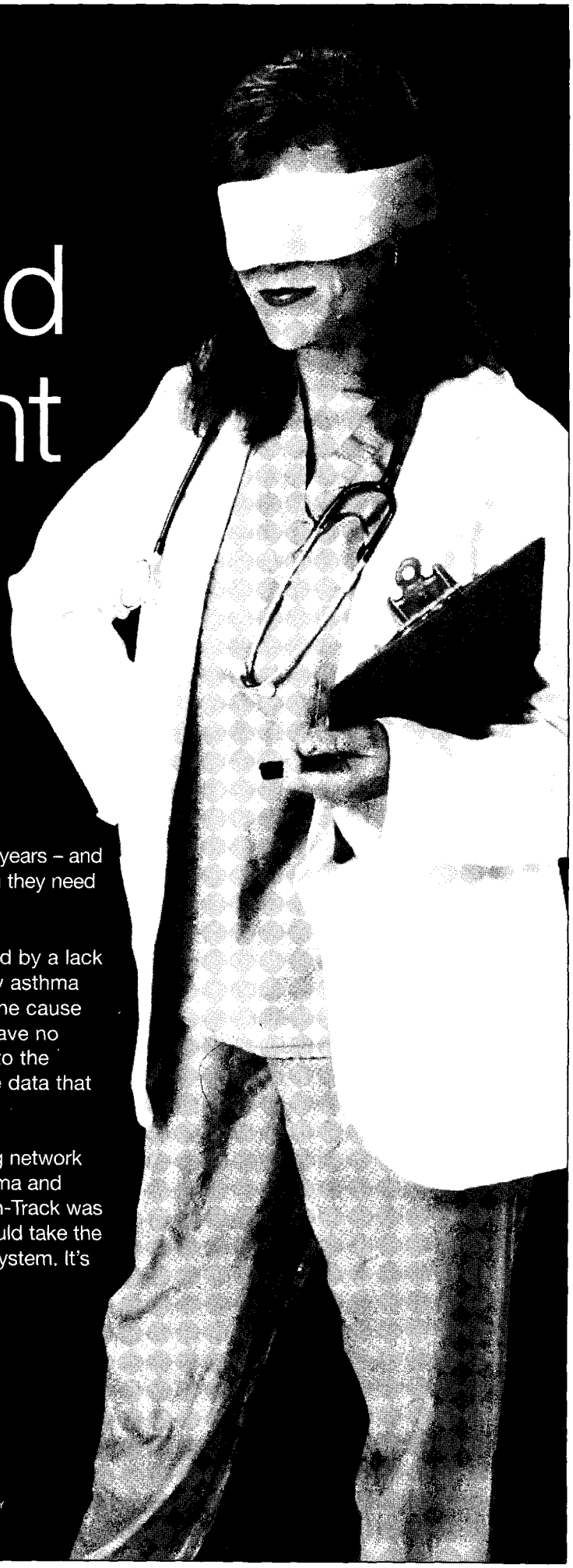
We're Blindfolded in the Fight Against Asthma



Asthma rates have been rising unchecked for twenty years – and they will keep rising until communities have the weapon they need to win the fight: information.

Right now, we are operating blindfolded, handicapped by a lack of basic information about where, how often and why asthma strikes – information we need to identify and attack the cause of the problem. But, more than half the states (27) have no ongoing asthma monitoring and tracking, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. And the data that is collected is fragmented.

The fact is, America needs a nationwide health tracking network to warn us, to prevent the spread of diseases like asthma and protect our health and communities. That's why Health-Track was created and why Congress and the Administration should take the first steps now to set up a nationwide health tracking system. It's time to take off the blindfold.

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Pardoning the President

Tod Lindberg's suggestion that Bill Clinton be pardoned is wrong and enormously premature ("Pardon Him," May 15). I won't try to answer point by point, but I have several thoughts.

Lindberg draws parallels between Richard Nixon and Bill Clinton. Surely there are similarities, yet there are also apples-and-oranges differences. The main one: Richard Nixon resigned. He "suffered," so his pardon came in a different context.

If President Ford had allowed the law to move forward, and the country had lived through the agony of Nixon's trial and possible imprisonment, it would have had both a sobering and an instructive effect on us. We would have been left with a fresh appreciation of the weighty public trust inherent in the presidency, particularly the moral and ethical expectations of the office. In such a post-Nixon atmosphere, we might never have elected Bill Clinton, either because of the way we looked at him, or because Clinton might have decided he couldn't be elected given the scandalous baggage he carried (although I really don't think Clinton has enough shame to make such a critical self-appraisal).

Every president should understand that if he or she abuses the office and breaks the law, he will be subject to due process and face whatever the law considers just, as anyone else would.

Lindberg also mentions that the Constitution allows for prosecution apart from impeachment. Our Founders did that and it was a brilliant idea. Why not let the Constitution work?

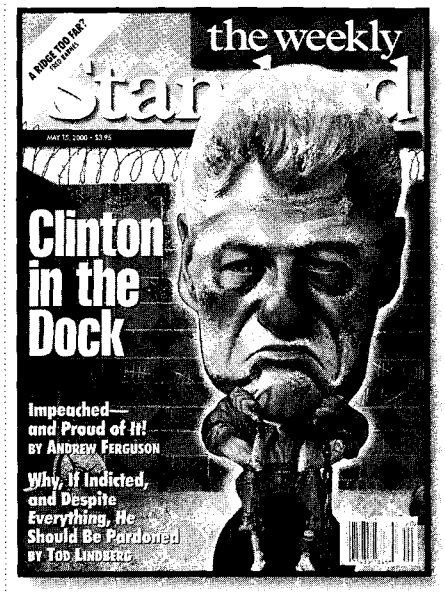
John Anderson
Waldorf, MD

Bobos in Bondage

I edit and publish one of the oldest sadomasochist magazines, *The Sand-MUtopian Guardian*. I have also been a professional whip and toy maker for the past 15 years, and an occasional member of S/M organizations. I suppose that would make me one of the "Marquis de Sades" to whom David Brooks refers in "The New Upper Class" (May 8).

Speaking from that perspective, Brooks is right! If anything, he has understated his case. What was formerly a dark, forbidden, underground lifestyle has been appropriated, sanitized, and packaged so it can be sold to a mass market by a new, mainstream-friendly entrepreneurial class—as well as by a growing number of commercial ventures offering "kinky" products, publications, and Internet content for a price.

If there is anything Brooks has wrong, it is the degree to which he associates consensual, erotic, ritualized, sadomasochistic sexual practice with bohemians, liberals, and leftists. Not only does the APEX organization he mentions "encourage" a highly structured set of acceptable limits and approved behav-



iors, it trains and "empowers" specialist volunteers to enforce (with the aid of police if necessary) these standards both within their own organization, and among those who share their values.

Leftist writers from Marx onward have been consistently in agreement that hedonism and eroticism are counterrevolutionary and ever-so-*verboten* for would-be liberators of the masses. Nor have homosexuals, prostitutes, pornographers, sex educators, consensual sadomasochists, or their apologists fared well under leftist revolutionary regimes. Even non-totalitarian European welfare states have enshrined healthy, normal, heterosexual, appropriately indulged-in, reproductive sex-for-love and denigrated pretty much everything else.

De Sade himself was something of a contradiction. Personally he was a profound political, economic, moral, and social conservative—a pure, traditional *ancien régime* aristocrat. But he felt that rank and status entitled him to a little blasphemous amusement or outré sexuality, much as his idol, Louis XV had enjoyed. Thrift, self-restraint, and sober conjugal fidelity were values he associated with the Protestants and bourgeois who were becoming increasingly important in national affairs—and were much despised and resented for it!

Much of de Sade's work seems to employ heavy-handed irony, and rather feeble satire, to argue that a purely humanistic morality must inevitably lead to the delicious debaucheries and casual slaughters which typify his writings. However, when the literary or political need arose, de Sade could mimic Rousseau and Voltaire with the best of them and mouth the slogans of the Enlightenment almost as if he believed in them—after a dozen years in prison.

More important, consensual sadomasochists formed an upper class that included many bourgeois from the early 1700s onward. Where the aristocracy and state officials caused prostitutes to be whipped and thieves to be hanged, their wealthy middle-class imitators hired prostitutes to whip (and sometimes hang) them! Whatever else they were, they were nothing like Hippies.

To this day, sadomasochism devotees are almost exclusively college-educated, white, well-employed men and women, who are more than twice as likely to describe themselves as "right wing" than as "leftist."

In many cases, sadomasochistic practice serves as a politically correct way of dispensing with the trappings of feminist language and ideology—without abandoning spousal income and marital intimacy as well.

For better or worse, David Brooks is also correct that anti-bourgeois bohemianism has been relegated to the dustbin of history along with all elitist art and letters, in general. As for countercultural political activity, where T-shirts used to be silk-screened with anti-establishment slogans and witticisms, today they carry the corporate logos of products manufactured in sweatshops and prison camps.

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On Target

H.R. 2944 & Electricity

Respect for the States and Limits on Federal Regulation — The Key Principles Underlying H.R. 2944

Any federal legislation that restructures America's electric industry must embrace two fundamental principles. First, it must be deferential to the long standing prerogatives of the States. Second, it must be truly deregulatory and constrain the appetite of federal regulators to regulate. H.R. 2944 as reported by the House Subcommittee on Energy and Power now embodies these two crucial principles.

EUSA
Electric Utility Shareholders Alliance

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When compared with the right-sizing of both the government and the workforce, does it matter how long someone wears their hair, or what form their private hedonism takes?

MITCH KESSLER
Copiague, NY

DAVID BROOKS'S ARTICLE resonates with a feeling of authenticity. But it's as shallow as the binary formula he uses to explain Western cultural history.

If we could ever have sliced history neatly into the pros and cons of left-bohemian and right-bourgeois ideologies and lifestyles all would be quite simple, but this is not the case. Both sides have always had their own bohemian or bourgeois fringe, and the line between them has always been grey if existent at all. It's only self-important historians and caustic journalists who characterize cultural conflict as a neat opposition that they themselves may rise above.

No, cultural history is as messy as de Sade's original imaginary torture chamber, an image that S/M practitioners do not necessarily want to reproduce just so they may be categorized as bohemian instead of bourgeois. The left has never agreed that sexual freedom is a valuable anti-bourgeois ideal. André Breton's Surrealists rejected the crude sexual imagery of colleagues Georges Bataille and Salvador Dali, and while some Second Wave feminists who cannot be numbered among the bourgeoisie lobbied to close porn video outlets, others started BDSM groups. Similarly, it is not left-bohemians who have made Hugh Hefner a multi-millionaire.

Although it is compelling to present cultural history in neatly packaged oppositional categories, it is ultimately misinformed and distorted. Most practitioners of S/M are interested in expressing their passions in a safe, consensual situation, and beyond that their politics are as various as their personal backgrounds. Their point, and mine, is that sexual freedom has been and is practiced by all sectors of society. Indeed, it is only in the puritan sphere of American journalism that sexual freedom is represented as "bohemian," deviant, anomalous, or scandalous.

LINDA WAYNE
Minneapolis, MN

CENSORSHIP OR SENSITIVITY?

SINCE WHEN ARE LYING, fear-mongering, and rudeness the sort of values conservatives defend? Yet this is what Jay Nordlinger does with his apologia of Dr. Laura Schlessinger ("Censoring Dr. Laura," May 8).

Nordlinger wants readers to believe that Dr. Laura is guilty only of holding unpopular opinions. But he avoids the uncomfortable truth—Schlessinger deliberately misleads people with her pronouncements on homosexuality. For example, her assertion that gays are more likely than heterosexuals to molest children is patently false, the opposite of what credible research shows. Likewise on "reparative therapy"; most experts agree that trying to counsel gays into heterosexuality is harmful.

Nordlinger ignores the event that precipitated the controversy this spring: the release of a letter signed by hundreds of individuals and associations—including the American Psychological Association, clergy members, and civil rights leaders—calling on Dr. Laura to use her platform to promote understanding and respect, not fear and divisiveness. The letter, drafted and circulated by the Horizons Foundation, explicitly stated that censoring Dr. Laura was not its goal.

Finally, Dr. Laura misled Nordlinger too. Around the time her spokesperson was telling him Dr. Laura was lying low, she was, in fact, appearing on *Larry King Live* (May 3). Nordlinger says she has "buckled little" from the criticism. But on *Larry King Live* she backed away from earlier statements, including her belief that homosexuality is a "biological error." She told King "I am not the expert." So she tells the truth sometimes.

JOHN MOYERS
PUBLISHER, *TOMPAINE.COM*
Washington, DC

JAY NORDLINGER RESPONDS: Mr. Moyers obviously disagrees with Dr. Laura about homosexuality. Fine. But to suppose that all bright and good people hold only one view on the subject is an error (biological or not).

I do not consider Dr. Laura a liar or fear-monger. Moyers calls her rude; I would call her astringent (which many of us find rather refreshing). Moyers favors certain experts; Dr. Laura favors certain others. Unless Moyers has his way, the debate will continue.

When I wrote that Dr. Laura was "lying low," I meant that she wished to avoid for a while the subject of gays. Obviously, she does such things as appear on *Larry King*: She has books and shows to sell.

Truth is, Moyers and his like are trying to bully Dr. Laura, and anyone tempted to stand with her. They are trying to shut her up, bump her off the air. Some want to bump her off literally, judging from the death threats. The assault on her has been vicious and—to use a word that Moyers will find as outmoded and offensive as Dr. Laura's views on homosexuality—un-American.

I don't like bullies, whether they're gay or whatever. And I hope they don't prevail.

BELLOW THE BELT

IN HIS EXCELLENT REVIEW of Saul Bellow's *Ravelstein* ("Bellow's Bloom," May 8), J. Bottum remarks that "the novelistic elements end up turning the book into a far more cruel picture of Bloom and the homosexual life than reviewers have allowed themselves to admit—far more cruel, in fact, than Bellow himself seems to realize."

The first part of this observation is absolutely correct: *Ravelstein* is indeed cruel to the memory of Allan Bloom. But it is difficult to read Bellow's novel and not conclude that the cruelty—and the contempt—was deliberate. Although presented as an homage to his late friend, *Ravelstein* is in fact an exercise in revenge—not only on Bloom but also on sundry other figures, especially the late Edward Shils. In the name of "frankness" and "full disclosure," *Ravelstein* gives us a malicious and thoroughly trivialized view of Bloom's life and thought. Kenneth R. Weinstein's memoir of Bloom ("The Real Allan Bloom") that accompanied Bottum's review got this part exactly right: "*Ravelstein* shatters the dignity with which Bloom maintained the privacy of his personal life." Some friend.

ROGER KIMBALL
New York, NY

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Kirk Bloodsworth, shown here with his wife Brenda, was sentenced to death in Maryland in 1984. Nine years later, irrefutable DNA evidence proved his innocence.

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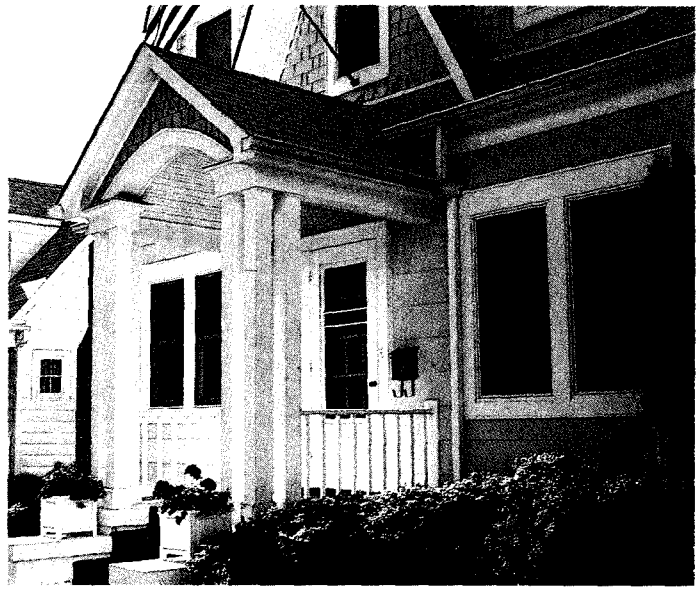

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the weekly Standard

The Appeasement Gamble

"By this time next year we shall know whether the policy of appeasement has appeased, or whether it has only stimulated a more ferocious appetite."

—*Winston S. Churchill*

The House will vote on granting permanent most-favored-nation status to China this week, and it looks like the one-two-three punch of American corporate lobbying, White House horse-trading, and the Republican leadership's arm-twisting may succeed in giving Bill Clinton his victory. The overwhelming majority of pro-China votes, we are sad to say, will be cast by Republicans.

We oppose most-favored-nation status for China. Republicans especially should vote against giving China a free pass to repress its people, threaten its neighbors, modernize its military, and undermine vital American interests in East Asia.

The Clinton administration, led by national security adviser Sandy Berger, has spent the last few months insisting that passage of permanent trade status is the magic cure for all that ails China and the answer to our concerns about China's growing might and growing ambitions.

If Congress approves permanent MFN for China, Berger claims, it will help the "soft-liners" win their battle against the "hard-liners," stimulate press freedom and open debate, alleviate government repression, force China's leaders to loosen their grip, and liberate the forces of democracy. It will open the Chinese market to American goods and services, and thereby infect the Chinese people with the spirit of democracy. And it will lead China to treat its neighbors, above all Taiwan, in a moderate, peaceful fashion. China will become fully integrated into the international political and economic order, and thereby fulfill the Clinton administration's dream of a great "strategic partnership."

Republicans will be mouthing some version of this argument on the floor this week, and some may even believe it. Many others, we suspect, will latch onto the Clinton administration's rhetoric of "engagement" for lack of anything better to justify their vote. (After all, they can't exactly get up on the floor and say they're voting for permanent MFN because the lobbyists from Caterpillar and Boeing told them to.) Whether sincere or cynical, however, those who vote to approve China's permanent trade status on the grounds that it will reform China's domestic and international behavior deserve to be taken at their word. And to be held to account for their action.

What will we say when the Chinese government makes its next arrest of religious leaders? We won't have to wait long to find out, because Beijing is constantly rounding up followers of one faith or another.

What will they say when the Chinese government makes its next arrest of religious leaders? We won't have to wait long to find out, because Beijing is constantly rounding up followers of one religious faith or another. Even as we went to press, Chinese police in Sichuan province arrested 20 members of a religious sect that opposes the government's "family planning" policies.

One of the leaders of this "evil cult" was recently sentenced to one year of "re-education" in a labor camp. In the coming weeks and months, more members of the Falun Gong, more Christians, and more Tibetan Buddhists will be persecuted and, in some cases, killed. Let those who voted for permanent trade status for China explain then what a boon it was for Chinese freedom.

What will they say when the Communist regime in China tightens restrictions on an already muzzled press and carries out a purge of intellectuals and academics infected by Western "bourgeoisification"? In fact, such a purge has already begun under the guise of president Jiang Zemin's recently inaugurated nationwide "Three

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Stresses Campaign." (The "three stresses" are: "Study the Marxist canon; be righteous; and be politically correct.") Prominent Chinese economists famous in the West for their support of economic reform have been publicly denounced by President Jiang himself. Meanwhile, in preparing for China's accession to the World Trade Organization, Beijing has already begun an effort to bring Chinese media even more firmly under the control of the Communist party.

What will they say when the so-called soft-liners are driven out of their party leadership positions and replaced by hacks known chiefly for loyalty to Jiang Zemin? According to the *South China Morning Post*'s respected China-watcher Willy Wo-lap Lam, "the political fortunes of politicians who might pose a challenge to Mr. Jiang are in decline." That would include the Clinton administration's favorite Chinese reformer, premier Zhu Rongji, who is slated to retire from the Politburo in 2002. Zhu masterminded China's accession to the WTO. It looks as if Jiang may soon reward him by easing him from power.

And what will they say when China steps up the heat on Taiwan, perhaps to the point of military action? Sandy Berger has described the Chinese as having adopted a "wait and see" approach to Taiwan. Well, in a way that's right. China plans to wait until after Congress passes permanent trade status and then see what kind of military intimidation will be most effective in forcing Taiwan to knuckle under. Even with the vote pending, Beijing has continued to threaten Taiwan with war if President Chen Shui-bian refuses to accept China's demands and agree to the "One China" principle. Last week China's army newspaper, the *Liberation Army Daily*, treated its readers to front-page photographs of fighter jets, tanks, and troops storming an unidentified beach—under the headline "Prepared to fight!" Should China undertake some military action against Taiwan within the next twelve months, how will those who voted for permanent MFN this week explain themselves?

We would be gratified if the House did the right thing this week, if it acted on moral principle and national interest and voted against permanent MFN for China. But if a majority of the House are determined to do the wrong thing, then the proponents of engagement will have gotten everything they wanted. And when their misguided and dangerous policy fails, we will at least have the consolation of clarity.

Just as it may have been necessary to test the theory of détente with the Soviet Union before Americans could be persuaded to follow the course charted by Ronald Reagan, we may have to pass through a similar evolution with regard to China. Knowing what failed, we can then begin to forge a policy that can succeed.

—William Kristol and Robert Kagan, for the Editors

Michael Ramirez

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Elián as P

At the Wye Plantation, Clinton's interests and Castro's converge.

BY CHRISTOPHER CALDWELL

AP / Wide World Photos

"I THINK it's his school uniform," said Justice Department spokesperson Carole Florman of the white sailor shirt and blue scarf Elián González appeared in at Wye Plantation last week. The editors of Cuba's government newspaper *Granma* recognized Elián's outfit, and that's why they ran five pictures of him wearing it. It's the uniform of the Pioneers, the Communist-indoctrination group that Cuban schoolchildren are required to join. Pioneers are taught guerrilla warfare, sabotage, and gun assembly, instructed to inform on their parents' ideological deviations, and led in the singing of hymns to Che Guevara. "How Elián is educated is up to his dad," Immigration and Naturalization Service spokesperson Maria Cardona said. If so, Elián's dad is the only Cuban parent allowed to make such decisions.

The administration has allowed the Cuban government to set up a patch of Communist sovereignty on Maryland's Eastern Shore. Elián's school, according to *Granma*, is meant "to save Elián not only from the clutches of the empire and the Miami Mafia but also from the clutches of ignorance, lack of culture, and selfishness." There is a great hypocrisy here. The administration won support for its April 22 raid by arguing that Elián was being "exploited" by his Miami relatives. "In Miami," said presidential spokesman Joe Lockhart on May 9, "there was a media circus atmosphere. And the idea of bringing the boy out and sitting down with reporters and doing videos, that certainly was close to the exploitative line."

Christopher Caldwell is a senior writer at THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

But now the administration is allowing the boy to be used as a prop by both Democratic fund-raisers and Cuban propagandists. In so doing, it is violating the law and engaging in systematic distortions that could be described as propaganda themselves.

Elián has been allowed out of Wye only once, to attend a dinner at the Georgetown mansion of Democratic fund-raising powerhouse Smith Bagley. Bagley is a close associate of Al Gore's longtime fund-raiser Nathan Landow and the chairman of the Arca Foundation, a lobby dedicated to strengthening ties with Cuba. Last year, Arca bankrolled Pastors for Peace, the left-wing Latin America think-tank WOLA, and Randall Robinson's TransAfrica, whose ferocious lobbying effort spurred a U.S. invasion to install the Aristide dictatorship in Haiti. We seem to be getting closer to an answer to the question of who is bankrolling Juan Miguel's "lawyer" Gregory Craig. But one of the guests bristled at the suggestion that the Bagley dinner was a *fund-raiser*. "Not one dollar changed hands," he said. (Do such evenings generally involve handovers of cash?)

Arca was also involved in the cultural exchange between Cuba's national team and the Baltimore Orioles, owned by seven-figure Democratic contributor Peter Angelos.

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Angelos himself made news last week when it was reported that he would not sign any defecting Cubans, but backed down when several conservative thinkers, most notably Roger Clegg of the Center for Equal Opportunity, pointed out that such an exclusion would likely be illegal under the national-origins provision of Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act.

The INS's reading is that, since Elián's not a resident, the laws don't apply to him—at least in the matter of schools. You can't just set up a school in the state of Maryland without a thorough credentialing process, but that bothers no one in the administration. According to Cardona, "If [Elián's teacher] were purporting to teach American children, or non-Cuban children, of course it would be different." But that's not what the law says. In *Plyler* v. *Doe* (1982), the Supreme Court ruled that the state cannot exclude illegal immigrants from the benefits of its educational regime. Presumably those benefits include credentialing. But even so, Elián's Communist outfit shouldn't bother anyone. "It's not the INS's business what Elián wears on a daily basis, " says Cardona.

That, too, appears to be untrue. In fact, the idea that Juan Miguel has the final say-so on who Elián sees and what Elián does is, both legally and logistically, the main fiction on which the administration's—and Cuba's—other fictions rest. Let's go back to the warrants the administration flashed at its predawn raid. The Justice Department entered the house of Lázaro González for the purpose of arresting Elián as an illegal alien. If it did not arrest him, it has defrauded a court of law. If it *did* arrest him, it took custody of him. It would then be able to transfer custody to the father, of course. But there is a legal procedure for that, and we have no indication that it was ever followed. Did a prosecutor consent to the custody transfer? Was there a bail hearing?

So who calls the shots? Is it Juan Miguel who decides that Cuban politicians can visit but Americans not? That Elián can appear on Cuban television but not answer questions from American audiences? The Wye Plantation is protected by 58 federal agents and several coast guard cutters. Are they at Juan Miguel's beck and call? If so, is there any other private individual whose private residence is protected from media scrutiny by such firepower? When Elián was brought by motorcade to Smith Bagley's house, did Juan Miguel call the limos as he'd call a cab?

Of course not. The Elián affair is—and has always been—a matter of *raison d'état*. The rule of law has never stood a chance against the make-it-up-as-you-go-along pretexts negotiated between the Clinton administration and Cuba. This setup would not withstand the slightest media scrutiny, which is why the administration has worked overtime to obscure the truth. In this, its interests now coincide perfectly with Castro's. In Washington and Havana, the propaganda side of the Elián affair has now become the whole of it. ♦

Michael Ramirez

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Belief Control, Not Gun Control

After all, ideas are more dangerous than guns.

BY P. J. O'ROURKE

ROSIE O'DONNELL IS RIGHT: It is a shocking fact that guns kill people. But if we are concerned about people getting killed, we must realize that mere gun control will not put an end to tragic violence. During the past 300 centuries millions of people have died because of the negligent possession of religious beliefs. "And Moses stretched forth his hand over the sea. . . . And the water returned, and covered the chariots, and the horsemen, and all the host of Pharaoh," for starters. Then there's the Crusades, the Spanish Inquisition, communal violence between Hindus and Muslims on the Indian subcontinent, additional trouble in the Middle East, mass killings in the Balkans, Jonestown, Waco, and the Fatwa against Salman Rushdie. That is to name only a few examples of what happens when people take religion into their own hands. A national campaign for Belief Control should therefore be a first priority among morally engaged and politically committed Americans.

We can start by advocating a few basic positions that almost all Americans can be expected to support:

¶ Restrict the import of dangerous and flimsy foreign religions such as the Sun Myung Moon Church.

¶ Ban small, inexpensive religions —so-called "Sunday Morning Specials"—practiced by the more obscure televangelists and people with Confederate flag bumper stickers who go to church in cinder block buildings.

¶ Enforce existing laws, especially those that keep our children safe by making schools and other public institutions "Faith-Free Zones." (Much remains to be done. Too many teachers still end the school day by uttering such oaths as, "God, I need a drink.")

Of course, this is simply a beginning. We need a national system of accountability requiring all spiritual dogmas to be registered with the government lest they fall into the wrong hands the way Christianity did with Jim Bakker and Tammy Faye. Some elements of this program are already in place under Internal Revenue Service non-profit rules for church organizations. But the IRS only concerns itself with the money that churchgoers give. What about the *credence* that people give to their religions? Shouldn't this be investigated, too?

We also need a nationwide seven-day waiting period for prayer. This would give people time to cool off and reconsider reverence and supplication and maybe call their local social-services provider instead.

All religious believers should be licensed to make sure that they are competent to hold opinions and viewpoints and that they don't believe in just any old thing, such as creationism or a flat tax. Perhaps existing state motor vehicle departments could be expanded to provide "vision thing" exams and written tests in multicultural awareness, so that intolerance issues such as those between Moses and Pharaoh will be avoided in the future. And Skepticism-Ed classes ought to be a requirement for high school graduation.

P. J. O'Rourke is a contributing editor to THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

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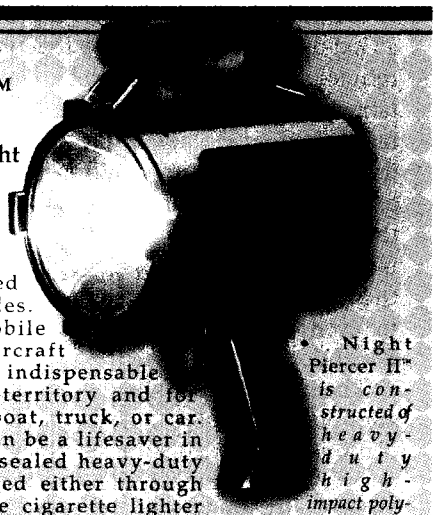

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All religions must be made child-proof. Our teachers' unions have done good work in this field, K through 12. Delaying first communions and bar mitzvahs until age 21 would be another positive step. Religious marriage ceremonies also should be postponed until the children by that marriage are old enough to handle the behavior of their parents in a responsible manner.

Convicted criminals and people with a history of mental illness need to be encouraged to play golf on Sunday mornings.

Easily concealed religions such as Anglo-Catholicism should be restricted.

And certain hymns that have only military applications could be prohibited or radically modified:

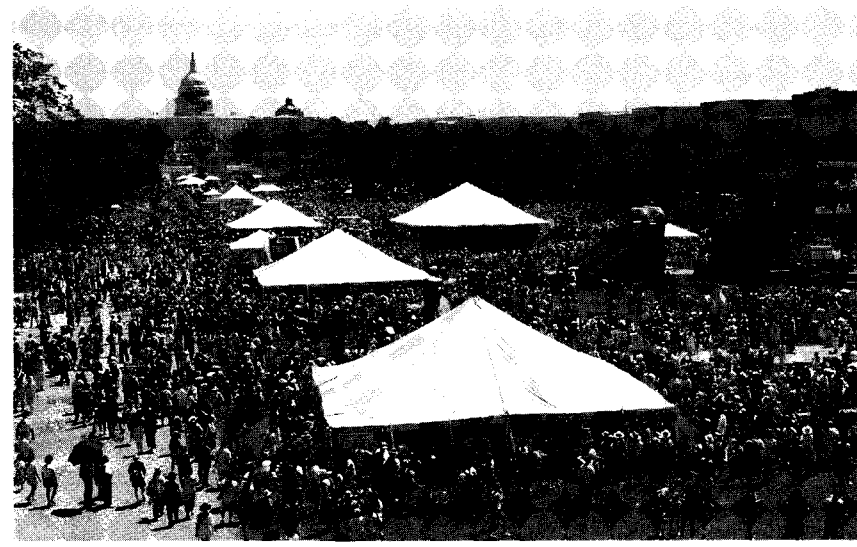
Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord,
He is marching through the vineyards where a really excellent cabernet sauvignon is stored.

Some will say that America is such a God-fearing country that individual religious beliefs can never be contained or eliminated. Yet millions and millions of Americans, in their everyday behavior (not to mention their television viewing habits), show us that this is no longer the case. Nonetheless we must face the fact that there will be tremendous opposition to even the most commonsensical Belief Control laws.

The religious lobby is well funded and well organized (although the National Council of Churches is on our side). We must make our case clearly to the public that we are not opposed to the use of religion for recreational purposes as long as no one is harmed or made to feel guilty, excluded, or icky. And we must work hard to counter the false and self-serving argument made by our opponents that all religious beliefs are "protected" by the Bill of Rights. Take another look, you God-mongering right-wing nuts: The First Amendment only says "Congress shall make no law *respecting* an establishment of religion." It can disrespect all it wants. ♦

Million Mom Mush

Hollywood touches, inflated numbers, and bogus stories from media-savvy moms. BY EDMUND WALSH



UPI

FOR YOUR AVERAGE "mild-mannered suburban mom," as CBS dubbed her last fall, Donna Dees-Thomases sure knows how to throw a party. There are several tens of thousands of protesters on the national Mall this Mother's Day for the Million Mom March she has organized (the exact figure will be endlessly disputed). On the main stage, with the U.S. Capitol as backdrop, celebrities are preaching the gospel of handgun registration, gun-owner licensing, and mandatory trigger locks. Rosie O'Donnell, the talk-show-host-turned-gun-controller is emceeing. Lesbian rocker Melissa Etheridge, folkie Emmylou Harris, and grunge widow Courtney Love all take a turn at the mike, as do actresses old (Susan Sarandon) and young (Reese Witherspoon). Even Hillary Rodham Clinton drops by for a while. As some kids are singing on the family stage, others swoop down the giant fun slide. The whole thing resembles a small carnival under a gorgeous blue sky. It's public relations gold.

But of course this should come as no surprise. Dees-Thomases, as you probably didn't learn from the heavy network coverage, is a pro; she's worked as a publicist for both CBS anchor Dan Rather and late night host David Letterman. According to the official myth of the Million Mom March, doggedly clung to by most of the media, the event was the brainchild of a typical suburban housewife, spurred to action by a brief flash of political awareness following last August's shooting at the North Valley Jewish Community Center near Los Angeles. But as Fox News Channel and the conservative Media Research Center tirelessly pointed out in the week leading up to the march, Dees-Thomases was anything but typical. And not just because of her background in PR.

For all the talk of the march being

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Here's what a million marchers might look like: The photo to the right shows the October 5, 1997, Promise Keepers rally, which independent experts estimated at over 670,000, stretching from the Washington Monument to the Capitol. The Million Mom March photo (opposite page) shows the back of the crowd roughly halfway from the monument to the Capitol.

AP/Wide World Photos

a "grass-roots" event, it is closer in spirit to the filming of a glossy political ad. If the Dees-Thomases name rings a bell, that's because she is the sister-in-law of Susan Thomases, who may be Hillary Clinton's closest political crony. Herself a New Jersey resident, Donna Dees-Thomases has contributed twice already to Mrs. Clinton's New York Senate campaign, and her husband Jeffrey has pitched in with a third donation. In the early 1980s, Mrs. Dees-Thomases worked for two Democratic senators from her native Louisiana. And while one of her favorite soundbites is to say that before last fall, "I didn't know the Brady Bill from the *Brady Bunch*," Dees-Thomases was Dan Rather's publicist throughout the 1992 political season, during which candidate Bill Clinton took to task President George Bush for failing to support the Brady Bill.

In fact, the march is political from top to bottom. The Mall is awash in Gore 2000 stickers. Both the president and first lady address the gathering in video statements from an earlier meeting with a group of moms at the White House. The Expo Tent, home to "Million Mom March Endorsing Organizers," features a buffet of liberal advocacy groups: the Feminist Majority, Ceasefire, and Common Cause. The Common Cause booth showcases a poster with opposing pictures of Charlton Heston and a bubbly little girl running through a field of flowers. Heston: "He wants to avoid getting hassled at gun shows. He's backed by special interest money." The little girl: "She wants to come home from school safely. She only has you." You and—according to the march's list of sponsors and donors—Guess jeans and Dannon yogurt and Oprah Winfrey's Oxygen.com and Planet Hollywood and Virgin Atlantic Airways, among others.

That little girl, and all the gun-control advocates assembled on the Mall, are backed by millions of dollars in corporate sponsorships. But widespread knowledge of that money, not to mention Dees-Thomases's background as a promoter with White House pull, would have spoiled the atmosphere of us-against-the-world activism. While Rosie decries the National Rifle Association's "blood money" and says bitterly of gun-rights supporters, "It is about money, not amendments," her image is broadcast on giant television screens dotting the Mall, which don't come cheap.

As the Million Moms march in place in front of the Capitol, another event—this one truly on a shoestring budget—draws a few thousand Bill of Rights enthusiasts to demonstrate against stricter gun control. Tucked into a corner of the Mall at 17th Street and Constitution Avenue, the Second Amendment Sisters have no fun slide and no celebrities (unless you count Judicial Watch's Larry Klayman). And they have no money, relatively speaking (they refused to ask the NRA for funds). Keynote speaker Suzanna Gratia Hupp, a Texas state representative whose parents were

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shot and killed by a crazed gunman in a Texas restaurant in front of her (she had left her gun in the car), urged her listeners to be patient with the media, imploring, "The press is your friend."

But it's not, really. Organizers of the Second Amendment Sisters rally know that they are underdogs. With the Million Mom March generating so much favorable publicity, they can take no chances. So their website instructs marchers: "Conduct yourself as you would if you were a guest in someone's home. Please don't try to pick fights or be confrontational. . . . Give the public a chance to see that we gun owners are not the stereotypical buffoons the media [have] made us out to be." And just to make sure of that last point: "Please, no camouflage, gas masks—and please, *No Empty Holsters*."

The Million Moms need no such advice. Organizers expect them to arrive without paramilitary gear, and they aren't let down. But the attendance has to be considered a letdown, though the leaders of the march have been dampening the expectations raised by their own name for weeks. Dozens of news organizations in the days after the event will credulously pass along the Million Moms' inflated estimate of 750,000 marchers. The Hundred Thousand Moms is probably more like it. The National Park Service no longer provides official crowd tallies of Washington marches, preferring to stay out of the middle of thankless arguments. But the grassroots truth-squadders who populate the Web these days quickly provide conclusive photographic proof that the 750,000 figure is ludicrous—with side-by-side comparisons of the Mother's Day crowd photos and aerial photos from the October 1997 Promise Keepers march, which all agree exceeded 500,000 and which, unlike the Moms, was standing room only from the Washington Monument to the Capitol.

What does this prove? Only that Donna Dees-Thomases and her fellow moms don't have to wonder whether the press is their friend. On the whole, it is. ♦

Sex, Violence, and the Supreme Court

The Constitution prevails over congressional pandering to feminists. BY JEREMY RABKIN

THE Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) sailed through Congress with overwhelming majorities in 1994. Who could oppose a federal statute supposed to counter misogynist violence?

Last week, however, the Supreme Court ruled that Congress has no authority to pass the key provision in the law, which allowed women to sue attackers in federal court as a remedy for "violence motivated by gender." Chief Justice Rehnquist, speaking for the majority, treated this conclusion as an obvious, straightforward application of precedent—which, in fact, it is. And even the dissenting opinions, for all their huffing and hectoring, declined to express much special regard for a statute that was, only yesterday, a feminist icon. Instead, the dissenters tried to scare people with alarms about the Court's returning the country to the economic and social policies of the 1920s.

This triumph for federalism could not have been safely predicted when *Brzonkala* v. *Morrison* began winding its way through the federal courts in 1995. Christy Brzonkala had filed a VAWA suit against two football players, fellow students at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, whom she accused of rape. School authorities eventually found that the accused students were guilty of "misconduct" but not of sexual assault. A Virginia grand jury reviewed the case and refused to hand down any indictments. So Brzonkala turned to a local attorney specializing in feminist causes who proceeded to frame a VAWA suit, arguing that school and state authorities had covered up the crime to protect Virginia Tech's football team.

At that point, Antonio Morrison, one of the defendants, found his way to the Center for Individual Rights, a Washington-based public interest law firm. CIR had already won some prominence in free speech cases, defending professors against feminist excesses on college campuses. As one of the few outsiders on CIR's board of directors at that time, I can recall wondering if CIR really wanted to get involved in a rape case.

True, there were good reasons why local authorities had dismissed the rape claim. All the circumstances suggested that the late night encounter in Morrison's dorm room had been consensual, as he claimed. But Morrison's behavior could not be described as gentlemanly. And, in any case, federal rules of procedure require that, to raise a constitutional issue before trial, the defendant must stipulate to the facts alleged by the plaintiff. So the CIR lawsuit—raising the objection that Congress had overstepped the limits on its power imposed by the Constitution's Commerce Clause—went forward as a "rape" case.

By the time the case reached the Supreme Court, two lower courts had already applied precedents to find the Violence Against Women Act unconstitutional. And, most notably, the Supreme Court had struck down the Gun-Free School Zones Act (in the 1995 case *U.S.* v. *Lopez*), holding that this federal prohibition against carrying a gun within a thousand yards of a school was not in any way connected

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to commerce (let alone interstate commerce) and therefore could not be considered an exercise of Congress's power to "regulate commerce among the states."

Still, the Supreme Court's ruling in *Morrison* last week was remarkably unflinching. In *Lopez*, the Court dusted off the commerce clause for the first time in decades, complaining that Congress had made no serious effort to demonstrate that guns in the vicinity of schools have any impact on interstate commerce. In contrast, Congress held extensive hearings for the Violence Against Women Act and the Justice Department pointed to piles of studies indicating that violence against women hurts the national economy because injured or fearful women are less productive in the workplace. Chief Justice Rehnquist brushed these claims aside. Such reasoning, he noted, would allow anything at all—including every kind of crime—to fall within the ambit of congressional regulatory authority.

Rehnquist was equally brusque with the claim that Congress had the power to enact VAWA to enforce the Fourteenth Amendment's guarantee of "equal protection of the laws." Rehnquist insisted that this guarantee protects only against discrimination by the states, as past rulings have held, and that there was no showing that private violence reflected deliberate acquiescence by state governments. Justice O'Connor simply signed on to the opinion, declining to offer the sort of hand-wringing concurrence she often writes to soften the impact of a hard-edged majority opinion.

The truth is that VAWA was always a remedy in search of a problem. Rape is a very serious charge and rightly hard to prove. But it is hardly credible to argue that state courts shrug off the claims of raped and battered women—and especially hard to believe this in the 1990s. Decades ago, when the South was still in the grip of suffocating racism, there was some reason to believe that federal authorities—with the political backing of northern representatives in Washington—could make some difference. But violence against women is not exactly an issue that divides any one region from a more enlightened national majority.

In fact, VAWA does not actually target all violence or even all violence that happens to affect women, but only "violence motivated by gender [bias]." The only point is to provide federal endorsement for the feminist claim that sexism is as insidious as the racial hatred that led to lynching.

The Supreme Court rejected this whole enterprise with businesslike dispatch. Perhaps, after two years of feminist apologetics for President Clinton's sordid sexual conduct, feminist protest no longer has quite the political clout it once did. Even the Court's critics preferred to argue about wider threats to "civil rights," as they did in the editorial columns of the *New York Times* last week.

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The charge is farfetched. The bulk of civil rights legislation deals with discrimination in labor markets, housing markets, retail services—all plainly concerned with "commerce." Moreover, the Court has held that the Thirteenth Amendment, in prohibiting slavery, gives Congress wide powers to regulate discrimination on the basis of race. But the resort to scare talk about *Morrison*'s threat to "civil rights" indicates that feminist measures can no longer be defended by feminist rhetoric standing alone.

Indirectly, the dissents in *Morrison* seem to acknowledge this, too. Justice Breyer's dissent goes on at such speculative length about threats to other civil rights measures that only one other justice (Stevens) was willing to sign on to that part of the dissent. Justice Souter, whose dissent was endorsed by the other three justices in the Court's current liberal bloc, resorted to a bigger blunderbuss, protesting—at considerable length—that the Court was following in the footsteps of the justices who used the Commerce Clause to strike down New Deal legislation in the 1930s.

But it's an immense leap from challenging VAWA to challenging the National Labor Relations Act. For the Court's liberals to raise that specter is a sign of desperation. Or maybe they are just toying with the tactic that worked so well for President Clinton's defenders in 1998, when they insisted the Lewinsky scandal was not about perjury but about Republican efforts to overturn *Roe* v. *Wade*. *Morrison* shows the Court is not rattled by such tactics. For the Court's current majority, the Constitution really does mean something. ♦

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Soft Gore

The robotic vice president tries to be likable—but it's not working. BY MATTHEW REES

Orlando, Florida

LATE IN THE EVENING of May 11, as Air Force Two was flying from Dallas to Los Angeles, Al Gore ambled to the rear of the plane to take a few questions from the traveling press corps. But the reporters, ensconced in their first class-style seats, were either too tired or too entranced by *American Beauty*—yes, they show movies on Air Force Two—to ask Gore a single question. Surprised at being spurned, he humbly returned to the front of the plane and resumed making calls.

There was a reason, beyond simple fatigue, why the reporters couldn't be bothered with Gore: They suspected he'd just repeat what he'd said hundreds of times before, using language with less zip than he had in the past.

And they were right. After being criticized recently for personalizing his objections to proposals advanced by George W. Bush—calling them "smug," "arrogant," and "reckless"—Gore has begun to soften his language and, he hopes, his image. At three Social Security-related campaign events last week, the vice president was significantly more restrained than he's been in recent weeks. Indeed, he even trotted out his 87-year-old mother at an AARP event in Orlando, Florida, on May 17 and devoted a few minutes of his speech to her, in his effort to mitigate the popular caricature of him as a ruthless partisan.

Not a bad idea. A number of national polls released in the past two weeks show Gore trailing Bush by healthy margins—even in Democratic strongholds like West Virginia. Gore professes not to be worried. During a May 16 press conference at Fordham University in New York, I asked him about a *New York Times* poll released that day showing Bush with an eight-point lead nationally. "None of the polls matter at this stage," he replied. "Most of the people have not really begun to tune in to the political campaign."

Illustration by Earl Keleny

Belying Gore's airy confidence was his campaign's scramble to put together last week's events only after the Bush campaign had announced a major address on Social Security for May 15 (Gore was supposed to be off the campaign trail the entire week). And whether or not the polls matter at this stage, Gore is reading them. When I mistakenly said the *Times* showed him trailing Bush by six points, he interrupted to say the margin was actually eight.

Even more ominous for Gore is another set of numbers buried in the *Times* poll. Specifically, Gore lags behind Bush even though on weighty issues like health care, education, and Social Security, survey respondents say they prefer Gore's positions. This suggests many voters simply don't like Gore and may not be able to stomach having him as president.

The *Times* poll, for example, showed that 36 percent of those asked had an unfavorable impression of Gore, and just 34 percent had a favorable impression (Bush's numbers were 40 percent favorable, 28 percent unfavorable). That's deeply problematic at a time when there are few hot-button issues that can dramatically alter the political landscape. Similarly, after seven and a half years in the spotlight, and after reinventing himself during the Democratic primaries, Gore is unlikely to pull off another makeover.

It doesn't hurt to try, though, which explains the subtle softening of Gore's rhetoric at last week's campaign appearances. Rather than framing his opposition to Bush's proposal for partially privatized Social Security accounts in terms like "smug" and "arrogant," or referring to Bush's con-

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spiratorial "secret" plans, Gore stuck to bland policy themes: Market downturns could lead to reduced benefits, the transition costs will be high, and so on.

At a town meeting at Beaver College in suburban Philadelphia on May 15, the vice president said little about his Republican opponent, and his most barbed comment was that Bush "takes the security out of Social Security." In an interview with National Public Radio afterwards, he hinted he may stick with this subdued approach: "The American people deserve more light than heat on an issue of this magnitude."

Yet this leaves Gore in a Catch-22. Smoothing out his rough edges neutralizes the charge that he's a pit bull, but also deprives him of his most potent weapon: going negative. During the Democratic primaries, Gore surged only after he began hammering Bill Bradley for failing to "stay and fight" and for proposing an overhaul of the health care system. In short, Gore is at his most effective when he's attacking his opponents and demagoguing their proposals. This year, that approach won him the Democratic nomination. But it doesn't always succeed. Twelve years ago, when he waged a brash campaign for president, his slash-and-burn style won him more enmity from the Democratic establishment than support from primary voters.

If last week's events suggested Gore is looking to be more nuanced in his criticism of Bush, they also showed he remains an uneven campaigner. At Beaver College and Fordham, he displayed a masterful command of Social Security's details and deftly fielded almost every question from the audience. At Columbia Law School, he gave an inspiring commencement address (his daughter, Karenna, was one of the graduates). But at the AARP event, he often sounded more like an economics professor—there were frequent references to principal, percentages, and interest rates—than someone running for president. He also reverted to his somniferous monotone delivery, which yielded few applause lines. Promising to have the United States debt-free by 2013 isn't quite up to JFK's "ask not" or Reagan's "tear down this wall."

Gore's final problem? In flatly opposing any tinkering with Social Security, he looks more like a Henry Waxman-style liberal than a New Democrat. Even Democratic senators Pat Moynihan and Bob Kerrey have criticized Gore for his opposition to modernizing Social Security, as has Robert Reich, a smart liberal who was secretary of labor in Bill Clinton's first term. Writing in the *American Prospect*, Reich says Gore is trailing Bush "because he's not talking about what could be. He's riding on what is." On Social Security, writes Reich, "Gore is fighting to preserve the status quo. Who wants to go to battle on these grounds?" It's a good question, and one for which Gore, even if he can soften his image, needs a better answer. ♦

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Color Them Colorblind

Judges, liberal and conservative, are throwing out racial preferences. BY ROGER CLEGG AND JOHN SULLIVAN

THE FEDERAL COURTS are striking down more and more government contracting schemes that give preferences to bidders based on race, ethnicity, and sex. But the politicians continue to resist these decisions. What's more, the federal judiciary itself may be dramatically transformed by this year's presidential election. Consequently, many contractors are concluding that the time to attack these programs is now.

The Supreme Court over the past decade has expressed its antagonism toward official discrimination in a variety of ways. Most important were its 1989 *Croson* decision striking down a Richmond, Virginia, contracting scheme and its 1995 *Adarand* ruling, which declared that discrimination by the federal government was also presumptively unconstitutional. These two decisions—each by a deeply divided Court—are the critical weapons now wielded by contractors against government preferences.

But the Court has sent other signals, too. This February, in *Rice* v. *Cayetano*, it struck down a Hawaii law that limited voting in certain state elections to those with Native Hawaiian blood. Although it was a decision about voting and not contracting, Justice Kennedy wrote broadly: It "demeans the dignity and worth of a person to be judged by ancestry instead of by his or her merit and essential qualities."

Even more important was a unanimous per curiam decision by the Court earlier this year in *Adarand II*. After the earlier 1995 decision, the nonminority guardrail subcontractor had continued to try, without success, to get a lower court judgment in his favor. The federal court of appeals, in fact, had ruled that he now lacked standing to press his lawsuit. The Supreme Court reversed and warned: "It is no small matter to deprive a litigant of the rewards of its efforts, particularly in a case that has been litigated up to this Court and back down again." The Court's obvious impatience and its fast action in handing down this ruling sends a message to the lower courts that the justices are tired of pro-preference foot-dragging.

In general, the lower courts are following the Supreme Court's lead. In part this is because there remain plenty of Reagan and Bush appointees to the bench. Contracting programs with discriminatory preferences have been struck down by federal courts over the past few years in Dade County, Florida; Cleveland, Cincinnati, and Columbus, Ohio; Fulton County and Atlanta, Georgia; Houston and the state of Texas; New Orleans; and Philadelphia.

Indeed, the law is becoming so indisputable, and the attempts to justify continued preferences so specious, that even many Democrat-appointed judges are now striking down these programs. Judges chosen by Clinton and Carter remain more likely to uphold preferences than those picked by Reagan or Bush, and if new appointments to the Supreme Court overrule *Adarand* and *Croson*, then all bets are off. But for now contractors are enjoying victories even when the judge was not a Republican appointee.

For instance, Baltimore imposed racial and gender preferences in public construction contracts for the past 20 years but, in mid-February, a judge ended the practice. For 15 years Jackson, Mississippi, had a similar program, but it was struck down last Christmas. A program adopted in 1981 by New Jersey casinos mandating preferences in hiring and contracting has been terminated in three separate court decisions since November. The Baltimore scheme was struck down by a Clinton appointee, as was one of the New Jersey programs. The three-judge court of appeals panel that unanimously spiked the Jackson program included two judges appointed by President Carter. None of these cases even required a full trial.

Preferences have been no more successful when defended at trial. On March 7, Judge Richard Matsch, best known for presiding over Timothy McVeigh's trial for the Oklahoma City bombing, shut down Denver's 17-year-old contracting preference program. The city lost despite spending more than $2.5 million on various studies in addition to legal and expert fees of up to $350 an hour to defend the program. The judge concluded: "The most fundamental flaw in this effort to support Denver's preferential use of race, ethnicity and gender by statistical evidence is that no objective criteria define who is entitled to the benefits of the program and who is excluded from those benefits."

That is a common judicial finding these days. The Supreme Court's decisions make clear that discriminatory contracting programs can be justified only if the government can show that there has historically been discrimination against the businesses now being favored and that there is no other remedy. Efforts to make this showing are becoming ever more pathetic.

In the casino case, for example, among the groups preferred were Native Hawaiians and Alaskans. But Clinton-appointed judge Stephen M. Orlofsky noted he was presented with no evidence that "qualified Hawaiian-owned and native Alaskan-owned contractors even exist in New Jersey, let alone that these minority business-

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es are discriminated against by casino licensees in the purchase of goods and services." He likewise criticized the inclusion of persons of Portuguese descent, and further found that there had never been any findings of contract discrimination in the casino industry, period.

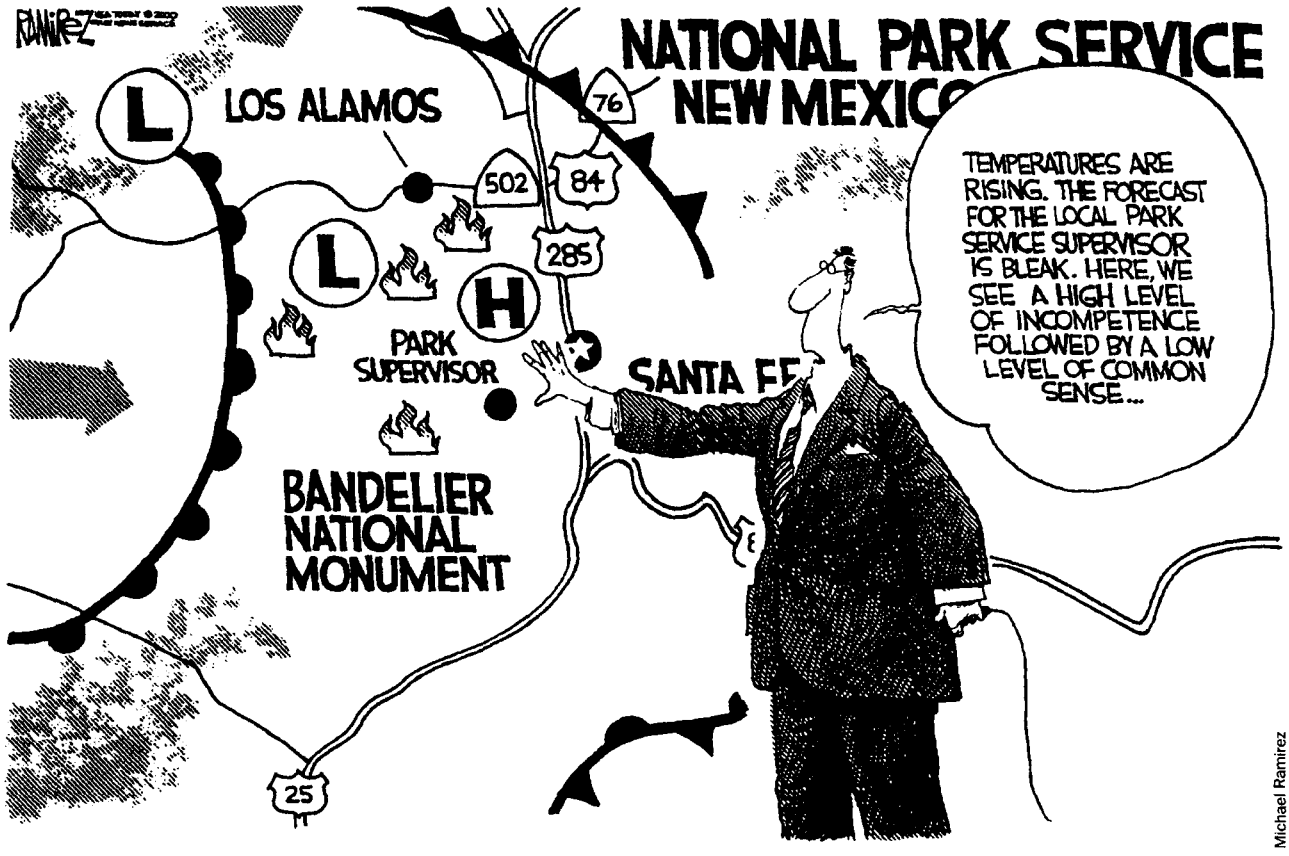
Judge Andre Davis, the Clinton appointee in the Baltimore case, remarked that the city did not bother trying to justify its race-based program until years after it came under attack. He found that there is "no legal support for the proposition that a governmental entity might permissibly adopt an affirmative action plan including set-aside goals and wait until such a plan is challenged in court before undertaking the necessary studies upon which the constitutionality of the plan depends." In December he had enjoined the program with a terse order finding the numerical goals had not been changed over the years even though the ordinance called for annual reevaluations.

But more litigation is still necessary because the Clinton administration, as well as many state and municipal governments, continue to do their best to circumvent the federal courts' rulings. Despite President Clinton's promise to "mend" affirmative action, movement has been glacial and even backwards: In 1998, the administration actually expanded to all federal agencies a 10 percent preference that, up until then, had been awarded only on defense department contracts. Furthermore, it has broken its promise that "the extent of any credit awarded will be adjusted annually." In fact, no such adjustment has yet been made, with the administration announcing last fall that no review would be released until June this year. In all likelihood, that date won't be met either, falling as it does in the middle of a presidential campaign.

Meanwhile, the administration has opposed every effort to end these preferences legislatively. In addition, it has consistently defended in court a wide variety of discrimination, including contracting preferences based on race, ethnicity, and sex. All this despite repeated rebuffs from the judiciary, such as in *Rice* v. *Cayetano*, where the administration weighed in on behalf of Hawaii's racially exclusionary elections.

Not that the Republican-controlled Congress has been much better. Both the House and Senate frequently reauthorize discriminatory federal programs, most recently on March 15, when by a vote of 410 to 11 the House extended the preference provisions in the Federal Acquisition Streamlining Act until 2003. This bill is now pending in the Senate.

For now, then, businesses that don't like being discriminated against must go to court to vindicate their constitutional rights. Fortunately, there remains a window of opportunity for successful challenges to be brought against affirmative discrimination in the contracting area. But in January 2001 a new president will begin to make his appointments to the federal bench, and the window will either stay open—or slam shut. ♦



Michael Ramirez

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Let Them Eat Spam

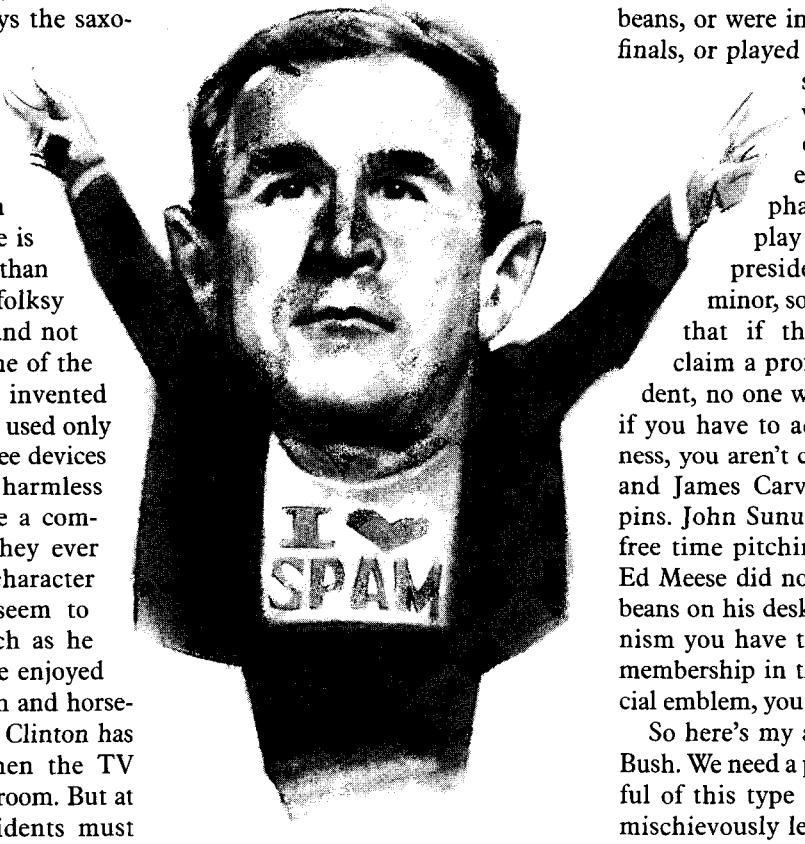
The next president can do better than jellybeans, horseshoes, or the saxophone. BY FRANK LAVIN

I ATTENDED A PARTY once in Washington, and among the guests was a fellow sporting a small lapel pin in the shape of a saxophone. I had to laugh, if only to myself.

Having served in the Reagan and Bush administrations, I am well aware of presidential fixations. Reagan had his jellybeans; Bush his horseshoes; Clinton plays the saxophone.

These three highly publicized affectations helped each of these presidents form an unpretentious link with the public at large. There is no more ordinary candy than jellybeans; no more folksy game than horseshoes; and not only is the saxophone one of the few musical instruments invented in the United States, it is used only in popular music. All three devices seem to have been harmless attempts to demonstrate a common touch. But were they ever anything more than character props? Reagan didn't seem to enjoy jellybeans as much as he enjoyed telling people he enjoyed jellybeans. Ditto for Bush and horseshoes. And I don't think Clinton has ever played the sax when the TV cameras were not in the room. But at some point, these presidents must have honestly enjoyed these things and we shouldn't blame them for trying to dust off some old habits.

It's not so much that presidents might be disingenuous. The point is that people who embrace these regular guy symbols—and are coincidentally in the administration—are disingenuous. There aren't many people over the age of 7 who have any particular enthusiasm for jellybeans. There aren't many people under the age of 70 who play horseshoes—not since video games were invented, anyway. And let's face it, although the saxophone is an instrument that can add a lot to a band, have you ever gone into a record store and asked the clerk for an album of good sax music? Has anyone?



Darren Gygi

So there's nothing wrong with jellybeans, horseshoes, or the saxophone. But not many people would go out of their way for what pleasures these things offer. Yet, because a president has adopted one as part of his public relations routine, otherwise rational people will surround themselves with these peculiar emblems. Reagan White House staffers would put jars of jellybeans on their desks for visitors. Employees at the Republican National Committee in the Bush years would say with a straight face, "I like playing horseshoes. Honest." And now people across town are wearing saxophone lapel pins. Heck, the presidents themselves have never seemed to really like this stuff. Hard to believe anybody else does.

There are a few possible explanations for this type of behavior. Perhaps one percent of the adherents have some kind of passion for jellybeans, or were in the state horseshoe finals, or played the sax in the high school band. This would mean the other 99 percent are either simple sycophants, looking to display their loyalty to the president, or officials so minor, so remote from power, that if they didn't publicly claim a proximity to the president, no one would suspect it. But if you have to advertise your closeness, you aren't close. Vernon Jordan and James Carville don't wear sax pins. John Sununu didn't spend his free time pitching horseshoes. And Ed Meese did not have a jar of jellybeans on his desk. If the only mechanism you have to demonstrate your membership in the tribe is a superficial emblem, you aren't in the tribe.

So here's my advice for Governor Bush. We need a president so disdainful of this type of behavior that he mischievously lets it be known that his favorite pastime is something atrocious—like eating Spam—so every opportunist in Washington runs around chatting about Spam recipes, wearing little Spam lapel pins, serving special Spam dishes, and so forth.

It'd make the saxophone look honest by comparison. ♦

Frank Lavin currently works for an American bank in Singapore.

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Better Off Dead?

Behind the opposition to the Pain Relief Promotion Act now before Congress lies the creepy ideology of the "rational suicide" movement.

By Wesley J. Smith

When Oregon legalized assisted suicide in 1994, Ron Wyden claimed to oppose allowing doctors to prescribe drugs for terminally ill patients to use in suicide. Now a Democratic senator from Oregon, Wyden has a chance to prove he meant what he said by supporting the Pain Relief Promotion Act, expected to come before the Senate any day. Instead, in his vocal and emotional opposition to the bill, Wyden may be showing his true colors.

The Pain Relief Promotion Act is intended to encourage the legitimate use of painkilling drugs—and deter their use in suicide. The treatment of pain is an area of acute medical underachievement, partly, some say, because doctors fear prosecution under the Controlled Substances Act if they overprescribe narcotics. The Pain Relief Promotion Act states explicitly for the first time that alleviating pain is a legitimate use of controlled substances, even when it "may increase the risk of death." And the bill would provide funds to educate doctors in pain control.

One of Sen. Wyden's chief advisers in the fight against the Pain Relief Promotion Act is a leading advocate of "rational suicide."

But the legislation would do something else as well. It would restore the uniform application of the Controlled Substances Act, undoing the partial exemption attorney general Janet Reno extended to Oregon to accommodate its assisted suicide law. Doctors in Oregon, as in the other 49 states, who give patients controlled substances for the purpose of suicide could lose their federal license to prescribe such drugs or even suffer criminal sanctions. In effect, the Pain Relief Promotion Act would end Oregon's nullification of a federal statute.

It is on this ground that Ron Wyden vows a filibuster. He is outraged, he says, that the legislation would interfere with "states' rights"—though he also maintains, bizarrely, that a bill intended to encourage pain relief would have a "chilling effect" on doctors' willingness to provide that very thing.

Senator Wyden doth protest too much. The Pain Relief Promotion Act would advance, not interfere with, the proper medical treatment of pain. That is why the American Medical Association, the National Hospice Organization, and many other medical groups enthusiastically support it. Experience in states like Rhode Island and Louisiana, moreover, shows that it is possible simultaneously to outlaw assisted suicide and promote aggressive pain control: After relevant laws went into effect in those states, doctors' use of morphine to treat pain skyrocketed. Nor does the federal bill impinge in the least on states' rights. As the (Portland) *Oregonian* editorialized, it is actually the Oregon law that "barges into an area of long-standing federal jurisdiction," and not the other way around.

Wyden's arguments, then, are off base, and his attempt to have it both ways with his constituents—to oppose assisted suicide personally while supporting the state's right to legalize it—looks like posturing. Sure enough, it turns out that one of Wyden's chief advisers in the fight against the Pain Relief Promotion Act is one James L. Werth, a Congressional Fellow working in Wyden's office. Werth, who has a Ph.D. in counseling psychology, is a national leader of the movement for "rational suicide."

Under the theory of rational suicide, mental health professionals do not have an unequivocal duty to prevent their patients from killing themselves. The only suicides they must stop are those that are impulsive or frivolous. If a mental health professional deems a patient to have a rational basis for wanting to die, the professional's primary duty shifts from preventing suicide to ensuring that the patient thinks through the decision carefully.

Here is how rational suicide would work. If a patient

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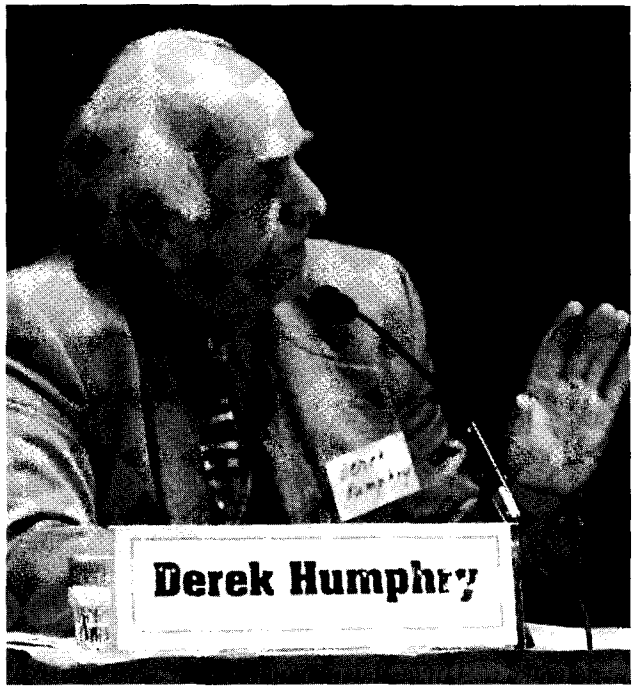
expressed a desire to die, his mental health worker would nonjudgmentally help him use proper decision-making techniques to sort out whether or not "to suicide." If the pros were perceived to substantially outweigh the cons, the mental health professional would stand back and refrain from impeding the patient's self-destruction (although some rational suicide advocates believe the better response would be to help the patient die).

Mental health workers, in their professional associations and literature and symposia, are still debating the criteria for rational suicide, but a rough consensus has been crafted. Werth, in his book *Rational Suicide? Implications for Mental Health Professionals,* recommends a five-step approach for determining whether the patient's decision-making process is "sound." He also asserts that people should be allowed to commit suicide if they have a "hopeless condition," which he defines as including, but "not necessarily limited to, terminal illnesses, severe physical and/or psychological pain, physically or mentally debilitating and/or deteriorating conditions, or quality of life no longer acceptable to the individual."



AP / Wide World Photos

Consider this definition closely: All suicidal people have severe psychological pain or mentally debilitating conditions. Every suicidal person *by definition* believes that his quality of life is unacceptable. In the name of nonjudgmentalism, rational suicide transforms self-destruction into just another choice. It is also a warrant for the abandonment of suicidal sufferers by psychologists, psychiatrists, and social workers, the very people who are often the last line of defense between a despairing person and a leap into eternity.

The rational suicide and assisted suicide movements are close allies in the struggle to make killing an accepted medical practice. Thus, it is not surprising that James Werth is also hip deep in the assisted suicide movement. He will be a featured speaker at the biennial convention of the World Federation of Right to Die Societies in Boston this fall, alongside Hemlock Society founder Derek Humphry, co-author of the Oregon assisted suicide law Barbara Coombs Lee, and the "Australian Kevorkian," Dr. Philip Nitschke, whose first suicide machine was just purchased for display by London's Science Museum. Werth's *curriculum vitae* lists among his "hastened-death-related activities" his service on the board of directors of the Nebraska Hemlock Society, ending in July 1999, and his recent service on the board of the Death With Dignity National Center, two organizations that advocate assisted suicide. He also helped coordinate an amicus brief in the United States Supreme Court in the 1997 case of *Washington* v. *Glucksberg*, which, had it been heeded, would have produced the assisted suicide *Roe* v. *Wade*. So much for states' rights.

There is a terrible irony in all of this. Last July, with Tipper Gore at his side, surgeon general David Satcher issued "a call to action" against suicide. In an alarming report, Satcher warned that suicide, the country's eighth leading cause of death, is one of our most pressing public health concerns. Approximately 31,000 Americans die at their own hands each year, far more than the 20,000 who are murdered. Between 1952 and 1996, the number of suicides among adolescents and young adults tripled. More teenagers and young adults die from suicide than from cancer, heart disease, AIDS, birth defects, stroke, pneumonia, influenza, and chronic lung disease combined. Suicide strikes older Americans particularly hard. On average, 18 older Americans kill themselves each day, with the rate highest among white males aged 65 and older. But how is Dr. Satcher to mount an effective anti-suicide campaign when mental health professionals and high public officials send mixed signals about preventing self-killing?

Those fighting the Pain Relief Promotion Act deny that their opposition is based on any support for assisted suicide. That is hard to believe. The fact that Sen. Wyden, the leader of the effort to defeat the bill, is working hand in glove with such a big shot in the rational suicide and assisted suicide movements strongly suggests that the opposition actually cares little about states' rights or chilling effects. Its primary purpose is to protect the beachhead achieved for assisted suicide in Oregon, and so to advance a nationwide plan to legalize medical killing. ♦

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Newt Gingrich's Last Boondoggle

The Hart-Rudman national security commission shows every sign of being an expensive flop.

By Tom Donnelly

During the decade since the Cold War ended, the United States has searched in vain for a new national strategy. The Pentagon has undergone a Base Force review, a Bottom-Up review, a review of service roles and missions, and an independent National Defense Panel review. At the moment it is readying itself for a second Quadrennial Defense Review, whose main virtue appears to be that it comes around every four years; it's the strategic equivalent of Bill Murray's *Groundhog Day*.

But the most expensive failures of the past decade have been the reports of the U.S. Commission on National Security/21st Century, known as the Hart-Rudman Commission after its principals, former senators Gary Hart and Warren Rudman. The $10 million commission, which modestly styles itself "the most comprehensive review of the national security environment, processes, and organizations since the National Security Act of 1947," has just issued the second of three planned reports, a 16-page effort titled *Seeking a National Strategy: A Concert for Preserving Security and Promoting Freedom*.

In fact, the Hart-Rudman commission has been something of a joke on the taxpayer almost since its inception. The project was the pet rock of former House speaker Newt Gingrich—now himself a commissioner—and remains in part an effort to inject some "third wave" thinking into the national security debate. It is also a collaboration between Gingrich and retired Air Force general Charles Boyd. Boyd, a Vietnam-era pilot, prisoner of war, and genuine hero, has worked with Gingrich on national security matters for several years. Gingrich's influence assured Boyd's appointment as the commission's executive director and a favorable hearing for Gingrich's Toffleresque views of the future.

Gingrich's imprimatur, along with the huge budget and the hope that distinguished commissioners could rise above personal ambition and produce serious work, gave the panel an initial cachet. Much of the foreign policy and defense elite participated; the 14 members range from former United Nations ambassador Andrew Young on the left to former energy and defense secretary James Schlesinger on the right. Yet there were signs of trouble from the start; and in the end, the commission produced mush.

The first bad sign was the resignation of commissioner Lynne Cheney, former head of the National Endowment for the Humanities and wife of former defense secretary Dick Cheney, in a dispute over the panel's first report. Cheney was unhappy with the suggestion that American power was bound to decline: "Emerging powers will increasingly constrain U.S. options regionally and limit its strategic influence. As a result, we will remain limited in our ability to impose our will. . . ." In recent months, most of the group's hired hands have been scrambling to avoid going down with a sinking ship. "A bad idea, badly executed," concludes one national security scholar who signed up to work on the project. "There is no organizing mind," says another who contributed several papers. Gingrich, characteristically, has been wildly undisciplined: "He would begin the discussion of some serious issue by saying, 'I was just reading last night . . . '" said a senior participant. "It was an indication that he had not given it any thought at all. He just threw out the latest buzzwords."

Staff turnover has been high and morale low. "The staff and consultants produced some very fine work," says one experienced analyst who worked for the commission, but many sources agree that the efforts of the permanent staff and the parade of outside advisers have been for naught. To insiders, the commission's final strategy recommendations represent Gen. Boyd's attempt to harness

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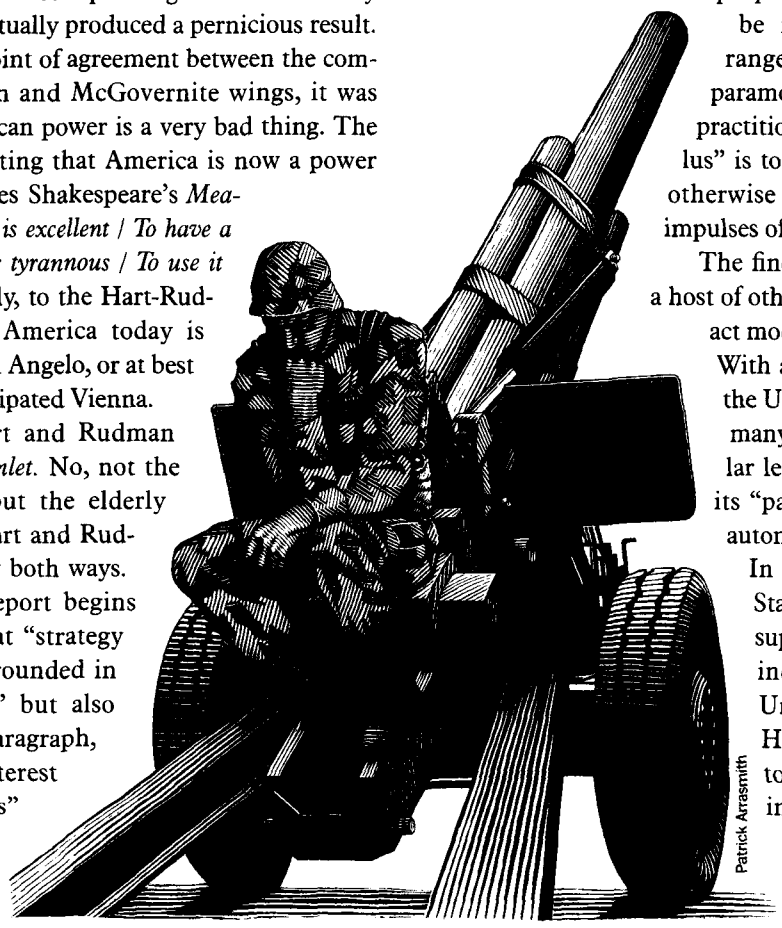
the various hobby horses of individual commissioners.

"It is totally out of control," says one staffer. "Gingrich wants to give a cell phone to every flood victim in Mozambique." Neither Hart nor Rudman attempted to direct the commission; Rudman reportedly bullied the staff whenever he was wrestling with ideas he did not comprehend. The caustic Schlesinger, perhaps the most experienced and thoughtful of the commissioners on national security matters, occasionally attempted to discipline the others. But so far, Schlesinger has been content to do damage control rather than lead.

All this expensive wheel-spinning would be merely irritating if it hadn't actually produced a pernicious result. For if there was one point of agreement between the commission's Kissingerian and McGovernite wings, it was that unchecked American power is a very bad thing. The strategy report, lamenting that America is now a power without wisdom, quotes Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure*: *"O, it is excellent / To have a giant's strength; but it is tyrannous / To use it like a giant."* Apparently, to the Hart-Rudman commissioners, America today is analogous to the lustful Angelo, or at best Vincentio, duke of dissipated Vienna.

But in truth, Hart and Rudman more often recall *Hamlet*. No, not the melancholy prince, but the elderly windbag Polonius: Hart and Rudman feel very strongly both ways. For example, their report begins with the assertion that "strategy and policy must be grounded in the national interest" but also claims, in the same paragraph, that the national interest "has many strands" including humanitarian interests. It affirms that "gaining and sustaining public support for U.S. policy is best achieved when American principles are coupled with clearly visible national interests," but also that "national interest, properly conceived, engenders respect for the interests of others."


Patrick Arrasmith

Hart and Rudman do not lay out an overriding American purpose in the world. Indeed, they argue that American strategy must "compose a balance" between the goals of freedom and stability. But in a world where so many nations remain ruled by dictators, liberty and stability are often at odds. How, for example, is the United States to "compose a balance" between liberty and stability in China? If stability reigns, so will the Chinese Communists. If America works to advance freedom in China, there will almost certainly be turmoil.

But in fact, a close reading of the Hart-Rudman strategy report shows that the commissioners' bias is for stability over liberty. The report whines that "America must not exhaust itself by limitless commitments," especially military ones, in regard to which "a finer calculus of benefits and burdens must govern." This, of course, represents the unhappiness of aging American politicians and statesmen with places like the Balkans, which is full of quarrelsome people whose problems cannot be neatly solved by long-range bombing. One of the paramount requirements for the practitioners of this "finer calculus" is to resist the "CNN effect," otherwise known as the moral impulses of the American people.

The finer calculus also produces a host of other reasons for America to act modestly in the 21st century. With any luck, says the report, the United States can lay down many of the burdens of unipolar leadership by encouraging its "partners" to "seek greater autonomy and responsibility." In particular, "the United States should be prepared to support the evolution of an independent European Union defense policy." Here the commission tries to square the circle by insisting that an independent Europe must act "in a manner consistent with the unity of the Atlantic Alliance." But Europe cannot both act independently and subordinate itself to an American-led alliance; it's an either-or proposition.

The Hart-Rudman report concludes that "the strategy outlined here for U.S. national security differs from the strategic habits of the past half-century." That claim is probably true: The report disavows the habits of leadership, power, and principle that unexpectedly won the Cold War. Alas for Hart and Rudman, these strategic habits may be hard to break—and since they made America into history's "sole superpower," some will wonder why they need breaking. ♦

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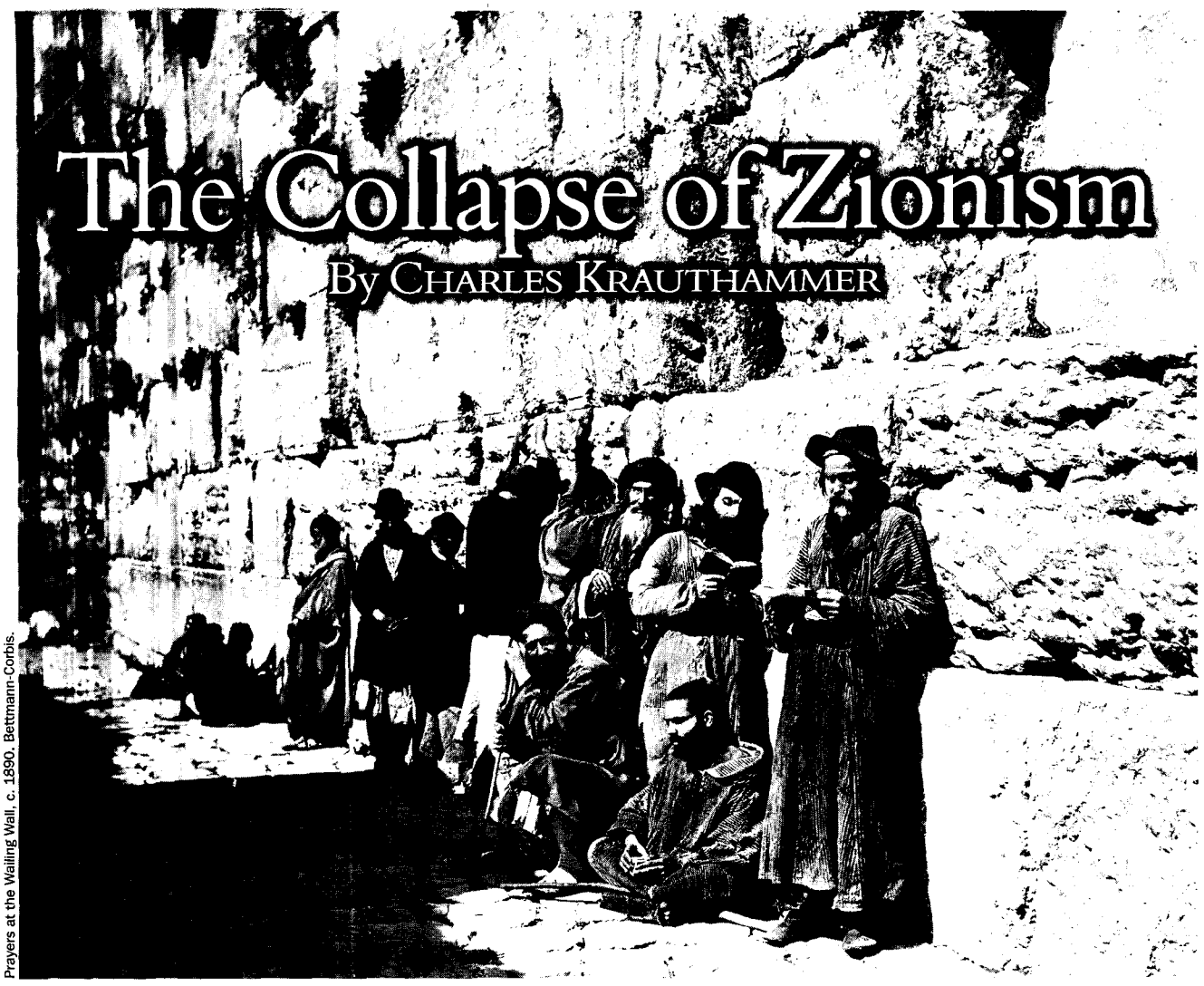
The Collapse of Zionism

By Charles Krauthammer



Prayers at the Wailing Wall, c. 1890. Bettmann-Corbis.

The most improbable story of the twentieth century is the return of the Jews to sovereignty in their original homeland. The establishment of a Jewish state after two thousand years of dispersion and powerlessness is an idea that just a hundred years ago, at the founding of the Zionist movement, seemed delusional. The only thing more improbable is this: That after merely fifty years of independence, the Jews of Israel would tire of it, lose faith in the enterprise, and forfeit their redemption. As things are progressing now, the *collapse* of Zionism may be the story of the twenty-first century.

For the last twenty years, Israel has been in retreat. One can make reasonable strategic arguments for some or all of the specifics. But the fact of retreat is undeniable. In the south, Israel gave up Sinai, three times the size of Israel, for a cold and hostile peace with Egypt. In the north, Israel is in the midst of a retreat from Lebanon that will leave its northern cities vulnerable to terrorist attack for the first time in a quarter century.

Israel has already conceded to Syria the entire Golan Heights. The only thing that keeps Israel from carrying out this withdrawal is Syrian insistence on making it as humiliating as possible. Syria refuses to offer the minimal courtesies in negotiations or the minimal gestures toward real peace. Even Israelis on the left, such as the novelist Amos Oz, have come out against a deal with Syria and against Israel's abject negotiating stance. Assad, said Oz, is "demanding not just peace, and not even just the Golan, but that Ehud Barak should go to meet him dressed only in his underwear, with his hands raised in surrender, and, if at all possible, wearing a bandanna on his forehead inscribed with the motto 'Israel sucks.'"

The Jewish State
The Struggle for Israel's Soul
by Yoram Hazony
Basic, 433 pp., $28

And on the most important front, on the Palestinian front, Israel has been engaged for seven years in a thinly disguised unilateral withdrawal. The Palestinians have not tempered their demands one iota since 1993. All the while, Israel has been ceding territory, authority, and legitimacy, while violating its own "red lines" on everything from final borders (the Jordan Valley is for the first time on the block) to a unilateral declaration of Palestinian statehood. Just last week, Arafat instigated widespread rioting to remind Israelis that the military option is his to exercise whenever he wants. How did Prime Minister Barak respond? Even as Palestinian police were firing live ammunition at Israeli soldiers, he got his cabinet to approve the transfer of three vil-

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lages in the Jerusalem area as a show of goodwill.

Some call such displays of magnanimity a sign of maturity. Another word for it is demoralization. In a recent essay in *Commentary*, Daniel Pipes pointed out the remarkable asymmetries, moral and material, in the Middle East today. On the surface, Israel has the appearance of a powerful, almost invincible, Middle East presence. It has a vibrant democracy, a highly developed economy, and continued technological superiority. (It is, for example, one of the world's Internet powers.)

Israel's Arab neighbors have none of these, but they do have will. Indeed, a half-century into their struggle with Israel, the Arab will to prevail is more powerful than ever. True, paper treaties have been signed. But the animus toward the very existence of the Jewish state has grown deeper, finding religious sanction in fanatic Islamicism and becoming the staple of official propaganda and popular culture. The Israelis, war weary and desperate for peace, willfully overlook these signs and search endlessly for just the right negotiating formula, just the right territorial concession, just the right dose of placation to bring them an illusive final peace.

The retreat is not just territorial. Israel's physical withdrawal is an epiphenomenon, a surface manifestation of a far more profound withdrawal: psychological and, ultimately, ideological. The territorial retreat tries to grapple (however mistakenly) with the question of *how* a Jewish state can survive; the ideological retreat raises serious doubts about *why* a Jewish state should survive.

These doubts, and the relentless attempt by Israel's intellectual elites to instill them in the mainstream of Israeli culture, have been chillingly catalogued in a new book by Yoram Hazony. *The Jewish State: The Struggle for Israel's Soul* lays bare the debate that has been raging in Israel—in Hebrew, and thus beyond the ken of most Western observers—about the necessity, indeed the morality, of a state that defines itself as Jewish.

Hazony is the young head of the Shalem Center, a Jerusalem think-tank that publishes the intellectual journal *Azure*. He's also a leading Israeli neoconservative (an admittedly small group), and he begins his book with a review of those voices in high Israeli culture—writers, artists, philosophers—that question the entire Zionist enterprise. He then offers a history of Zionism, probing into the great divisions between the followers of Theodore Herzl and those who opposed the idea of an exclusively Jewish state. In the last part of *The Jewish State*,

David Ben-Gurion in 1946

Hazony tries to trace the influence of these early opponents on contemporary "post-Zionism."

The central contention of post-Zionism is that the idea of a Jewish state—with its unique calendar, flag, anthems, rhythms, ethos, and history—is atavistic, a throwback to the romantic nationalism of the nineteenth century that begat, among other things, fascism and Nazism. In the modern world of the Internet, the global economy, European integration, and growing transnational interdependence, this ethnic particularism is hopelessly retrograde. The advanced peoples of the West are surrendering sovereignty. Israel should, too.

There is something wildly out of place about this idea. This is all well and good for Liechtenstein. Unfortunately, however, the neighborhood in which Israel finds itself shows no sign of giving up nationalism, particularism, or religious fanaticism to join the global bandwagon. No matter. The post-Zionists are morally offended and aesthetically appalled by the grubbiness of their neighborhood and the brutal provincialism of their compatriots. One leading Israeli poet, Dalia Rabikovitch, parodies the longing for the Return in early Zionist poetry with this twist on the twenty-third psalm:

As for me,
He maketh me lie down in green pastures
In New Zealand. . . .
Truehearted people herd sheep there,
On Sundays they go to church
In their quiet clothes.
No point in hiding it any longer:
We're an experiment that didn't turn out well,
A plan that went wrong,
Tied up with too much murderousness.

Aesthetic revulsion is compounded by a profound moral guilt about the Israeli experiment. In *The Jewish State*, Hazony highlights how much Israeli cultural production focuses on the original sin of Israel's founding and how the "new historians" consciously subvert traditional Zionist history with a version that places blame for the suffering and dispossession of Palestinians on Jewish aggression, terror, and hunger for power.

But the new historians are hardly content with exposing original sin. They insist on the view that Israel has lived in sin ever since. Take, for example, the Six-Day War. If ever there was a just war, a war of self-defense, it was Israel's war of June 1967 when its existence was threatened—indeed, its eradication promised—by the ring of states led by Egypt. President Nasser ordered U.N. troops out of the Sinai, where they had been acting as a buffer to guarantee Israel's security after its withdrawal from the Sinai in 1957. He blockaded

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A Zionist demonstration in Jerusalem in 1945

the Straits of Tiran, cutting off Israel's southern access to the sea—an internationally recognized act of war. He massed a hundred thousand troops, concluded defense pacts with Jordan and Syria, and waited—either for war, or for Israel to collapse under the weight of mobilization. (A country with a very small standing army cannot function when its entire male population is at the front.) Israel struck on June 5 and won the war.

Now, observe how this is portrayed in the modern ninth-grade history textbook issued by the Ministry of Education. There's no mention of the closing of the Straits of Tiran. No mention of the blockade. No mention of the expulsion of the U.N. troops from the Sinai. No mention of the military pacts among the countries ringing Israel. What single military event is mentioned as precursor to the war? Israel shooting down some Syrian jets on the northern border in May.

The textbook is full of other such travesties. The previous textbook had a map of Israel at the time of the War of Independence with arrows marking the invasion routes of the five Arab countries that attacked the infant state. In the new textbook, the map has no arrows coming in, just arrows going out representing Palestinians fleeing the country.

Another striking omission is any mention of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. This might seem merely odd, unless one understands that anti-nationalist intellectuals deplore the glorification of that World War II uprising as a fetishistic celebration of the Jew as fighter, and thus symbolic reinforcement of Israeli militarism.

What does post-Zionism mean in practice? It means that Israel should be not a Jewish state, but a "state of its citizens," a democracy like any other with no particular commitment to the survival or advancement of any one culture or people. Thus the most fundamental law in the Israeli canon, "the Law of Return" that guarantees refuge and citizenship in Israel for any Jew in the world (and which David Ben-Gurion considered the most important law of the land) is under attack for being nationalist, particularist, even racist. A democratic state, it is said, would have no such ethnic tests.

Nor is it just the Law of Return. Respected public figures, writes Hazony, have advanced the demand to de-Judaize the flag (with its Star of David) and the national anthem (*Ha-Tikvah*, "The Hope," which speaks of the Jewish longing to return to the homeland), and drain school curricula, the army, and the constitution of their distinctive Jewish national character. "The Jews living in Israel are now being asked not only to give up on geographical territories. We must also implement a 'redeployment'—or even a complete withdrawal—from entire regions in our soul," writes the celebrated Israeli author David Grossman. And what does this psychic withdrawal, this Reformation, mean? "Giving up on power as a value. On the army itself as a value. . . . Refining a new existence for ourselves. One which is no longer drenched to the point of suffocation with the myth of our exile from the land, or with the myth of Masada, or with a one-dimensional lesson of the Holocaust."

Post-Zionism aches for freedom—a new, quite un-Zionist kind of freedom: freedom from myth, freedom from chosenness, freedom from history, and, above all, freedom from power. Power is corrupting. The post-Zionists prefer incorruptibility. They yearn not for Zion, but for the purity that Jews enjoyed before they reacquired sovereignty. As one leading Hebrew University professor said decades ago in oppos-

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ing Israel's founder, David Ben-Gurion: "We are burying a dream,... the dream of a land of Israel, the state of the pure and the moral."

Over the last seven years, this quest for the pure and the moral has found expression in Israeli diplomacy and government. Of course, those in power are hardly going to call openly for the Jews to give it up unilaterally. How then to attain purity? The most ingenious solution to this conundrum comes from the architect of the Oslo accords, Shimon Peres.

Peres has discovered that power as traditionally understood does not matter anymore. In his astonishing 1993 book *The New Middle East*, he declares that "the traditional concept of national defense, which depends mainly on military and weapons systems... has changed." How? "The physical considerations of the traditional strategy—natural obstacles, man-made structures, troop mobilizations, location of the battlefields—are irrelevant." Or as he told the army's head of intelligence in a cabinet meeting: "There is economics and the military, and only a country which goes over to economics will win. Choosing between ten army emplacements and ten hotels, the ten hotels also constitute security. I'm for the European model, which emphasizes economics."

These statements would boggle the mind coming from anyone. But coming from the man who was only a few years ago at the helm of a besieged country, they are particularly ominous. Peres sees the Middle East as some sort of Benelux, where harmony and tolerance prevail, where power and weaponry are obsolete.

A lovely dream. And quite mad. The first problem is that Israelis seem to be the only people in the region who believe it. And it takes more than Jews to tango. Egypt has built a massive American-supplied military. Syria is trying to negotiate a huge new weapons deal with Russia. Iraq and Iran are acquiring weapons of mass destruction and missiles aimed at Israel. Syria already has missiles tipped with poison gas. Lebanon's Hezbollah vows to fight the Jews until Jerusalem is liberated. And the Palestinians have been building up their forty-thousand-man "police force." Its mission is not the arrest of burglars.

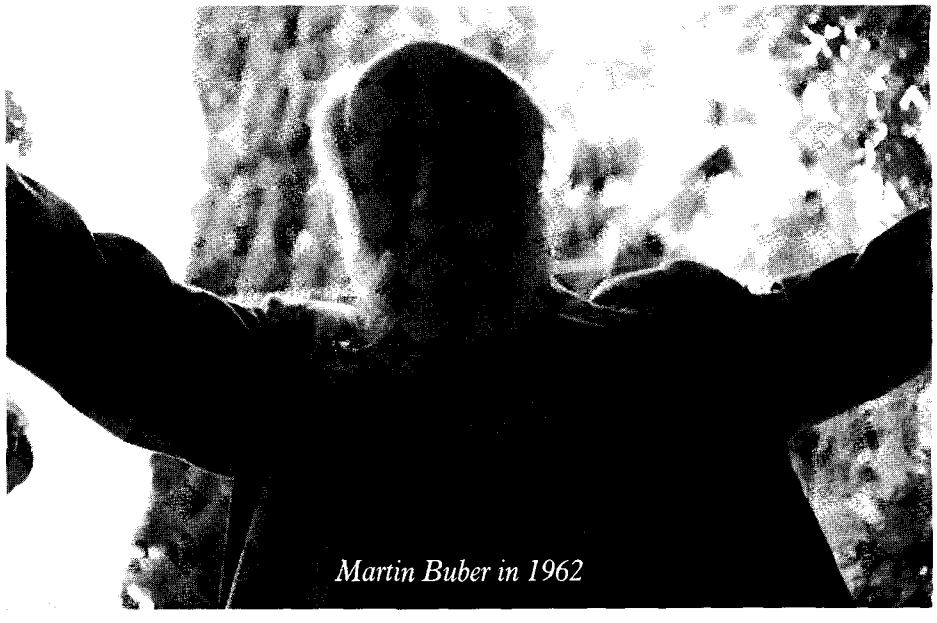
The idea that the Arabs have transcended the need for and use of power is simply delusional, as is the idea that they are prepared to enter into a kind of European Union with Israel. When the next war comes, when Arab tank forces come rolling through the Jordan valley (that Israel will have given up to Arafat in the current peace negotiations), we will see how much protection will be afforded Israel by its Maginot line of five-star hotels.

Peres's vision is not just geographically but historically adrift. Europe does represent a different model of co-existence. But that came only after the nations of Europe spent the better part of five hundred years in almost constant warfare with each other. The Middle East is where Europe was a few centuries ago—with very young and unstable nations still violently contending for primacy and power. Forget about Israel. Look at Iran-Iraq, Iraq-Kuwait, Syria-Lebanon, Syria-Iraq. Where in the Middle East do you find any model for Benelux?

Even assuming the Arabs were, inexplicably, to fall into line with this fantasy, what kind of vision is this new Middle East? During millennia of exile, the Jews of Persia and Babylon, of Poland and Spain, of Baghdad and indeed Belgium, dreamed and struggled and died for a return to Zion. So they could become Belgians?

The fundamental idea of Zionism was for the Jews to once again enter history as actors, not just as acted upon. And that meant acquiring sovereignty and power, and exercising both on behalf of the Jewish people. This idea is now under attack within Israel itself. Where did this loss of will come from? Why the loss of faith in the necessity, the legitimacy, indeed, the glory of a reconstituted Jewish commonwealth?

Hazony attributes this ideological collapse to the intellectual influence of a small group of universalist German-Jewish professors who dominated the Hebrew University, which in turn dominates cultural life in Israel. Best known of these is the philosopher Martin Buber, who opposed the establishment of the Jewish state at the time and, in Hazony's view, never reconciled himself to the reality of Jewish power. Hazony traces the intellectual influence of these professors through their students, and their students' students, on Israel's small but powerful intellectual elite.



Martin Buber in 1962

Now, it is true that David Ben-Gurion and his Labor Zionists were more

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interested in concrete than culture. Farmer-soldiers are not very given to philosophy. They were too busy creating facts on the ground—an army, a new economy, a government, a state—to bother very much with ideas. They did leave that field open to their ideological enemies in the academy.

Nonetheless, to blame the collapse of Zionist will on the professors is to give them too much credit. There are more parsimonious explanations.

One is simple exhaustion. It's not the professors but the people who are tired of the price of Jewish power. It is the people who agitated for retreat from Lebanon and the territories, in search of respite. It is they who have suffered not just war but isolation, reprobation, often vituperation from everywhere—including their erstwhile friends in the West. They are tired of being outcasts. They are tired of the hard life of sustaining the Zionist vision.

Who can blame them? They have fought five wars in fifty years. They look across the ocean and see their fellow Westerners—and their fellow Jews—living prosperous and serene, while Israelis get buses blown up at home and lose sons in an endless guerrilla war in Lebanon. Beginning with the War of Independence when Israel lost one percent of its population (the American equivalent would fill *fifty* Vietnam memorials), Israel has been bleeding for half a century. It is hard to blame a people who have endured so much for so long. To maintain Jewish independence in a hostile Arab sea requires enormous determination. Israelis have been fighting for three, often four generations. How many generations can sustain a pioneer spirit?

Another explanation, fuller than Hazony's, would situate Israel within the broader intellectual context of the West. In their anti-nationalism, anti-patriotism, cosmopolitanism, and distrust of power, Israeli intellectuals are no different from their counterparts in America, Britain, France, and the rest of the West. Indeed, Israelis are just catching up with deconstructionism and multiculturalism, with Lacan and Foucault. Modern Israeli art and dance and theater offer almost comical attempts to imitate the nihilism of the Western avant-garde. Post-Zionism is really just Western counterculturalism applied to the Jewish Question.

This page: Reuters NewMedia, Inc. / Corbis. Previous page: David Rubinger / Corbis.

Jewish settlers arrested by Israeli police in Hebron, January 23, 2000.

But that Western style of counterculturalism has far more serious consequences in Israel than anywhere else. The West is rich, secure, and dominant enough to play at cultural revolution. It can afford the luxury of oppositional and subversive elites. The tragedy for Israel is that it does not enjoy such luxuries. It lives on the edge. It has no buffer zone, geographic or ideological.

The worst disaster suffered by the United States in the last half-century is Vietnam. Yet within a few years, America had cauterized the wound and recovered. Israel cannot so easily shrug off catastrophe. It has no safety net. It has real enemies standing at the gates. If the army issues a code of conduct with no mention of loyalty to the Jewish people, that will have consequences. If its young people are brought up to believe that the Six-Day War—and thus the acquisition of the occupied territories—was anything but defensive, that will have consequences. If the Supreme Court begins striking down laws that shape the Jewish character of the state (such as the Law of Return) in the name of universal democratic principles, that will have consequences.

The West can indulge visions of its own corruption and moral bankruptcy without risking extinction. For Israel, such visions are mortally dangerous. They are already having their effect in culture, law, and diplomacy. The most dangerous threat to a political entity is demoralization, for before the Fall—of the *ancien régime* in France, of the Pahlavi dynasty in Iran, of the Soviet empire in Russia—comes the loss of faith in one's own mandate from heaven.

In an interview last year, the leading Palestinian author and activist Edward

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Said ruminated about the prospect of eliminating the Jewish state. "We must find freer, more creative, more inventive means.... I am speaking of a cultural battle.... Israeli historians themselves... are in the process of reconsidering Zionist myths. We must use the contradiction and dissent that exist in the heart of the Israeli population." Said opposed the Oslo accords and broke with Yasser Arafat over them. He believes that there is no armed solution for achieving Palestinian goals. But he does hold out one hope, the hope that within Israeli society there are now voices that understand the true nature of the Jewish state and will seek its liquidation through internal transformation. "Do you think the Israelis will renounce Zionism one day?" the interviewer asked. "Some have begun to speak of it," Said replied. "I think that the most intelligent among them are in the process of realizing that, despite their incredible power, their situation is untenable."

Israel's enemies see the future, a future Israelis themselves may now be creating: a world without Zionism, a world without Israel. ♦

Rogue Rage

The challenge to American foreign policy.

BY LAWRENCE F. KAPLAN

When a state routinely flouts international norms, menaces its neighbors, and inveighs against the United States, how should American policymakers respond? On this question, the foreign affairs "realists," commerce-minded liberals, and captains of industry who presently guide U.S. foreign policy are in complete agreement: The United States must not punish but rather "engage" the offending state—that is, offer it a mixture of financial rewards and blandishments for improved behavior. If applied correctly, its boosters maintain, engagement should bring all but the most obdurate adversaries to their senses. And if it doesn't? Judging by recent American policy, the next step should be: Engage more vigorously.

Rogue States and U.S. Foreign Policy
Containment After the Cold War
by Robert S. Litwak
Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 290 pp., $18.95

Engagement is sure to be a principal legacy of the Clinton era, creating precedents and expectations that may shape the next president and even the one after that. In the first scholarly bid to capture this legacy, the Woodrow Wilson Center's Robert S. Litwak has penned *Rogue States and U.S. Foreign Policy*, a book-length indictment of those who would contest engagement's worth. Having previously authored a sympathetic chronicle of the détente years, Litwak seems to have imbibed the lesson that, in the game of international politics, binding an adversary in a web of economic, political, and military linkages nearly always achieves better results than wielding the big stick.

But rather than celebrate the fact that this opinion has become canonical on the Washington panel circuit, Litwak insists that American foreign policy has lately been marred by "political demonization" and "containment." What most rankles the author is the inconsistency that has led American policymakers to engage states like Pakistan and Syria while dealing harshly with countries such as Cuba and Libya, whose malfeasance seems for the author to have abated in recent years. Fair enough: There is something hypocritical about maintaining sanctions against weak states of marginal significance, while actively engaging nations like China, which boast no less abysmal records but have large markets and political heft. This has left U.S. policymakers unable to explain why it is they tolerate in one instance conduct they loudly condemn in another.

To achieve a measure of consistency, a few lawmakers have suggested expanding the rogue state category to include states like Sudan and Syria, which clearly warrant the designation, but that, for reasons either of commercial interest or political utility, have thus far been exempted. Litwak's solution, though, is to do exactly the reverse—that is, to abandon the label altogether. For, according to the author, the phrase "rogue state" is a uniquely American invention "without standing in international law." More important, the widespread use of the epithet has distorted U.S. policy, "making it very difficult politically for policymakers to adapt U.S. strategy to changing conditions." What little utility the label does possess derives merely from its being a sop to "influential domestic constituencies," who use it "for purposes of political mobilization."

In the author's telling, such "threat inflation" is nothing new. It conforms neatly with the tiresome American tendency to "view international relations as a moral struggle between forces of good and evil." By indulging this tendency, moreover, the Clinton administration is merely repeating the mistakes of the Truman and Reagan administrations, which, rather than seeing the Cold War as the great power contest it so clearly was, cynically depicted it as a "moral crusade."

Now, ideally, a nation's foreign policies derive from a realistic assessment of the world around it and its own political values. Litwak's reading of the international scene responds to neither. To begin with, the claim that the rogue state designation derives less

Lawrence F. Kaplan is executive editor of the National Interest.

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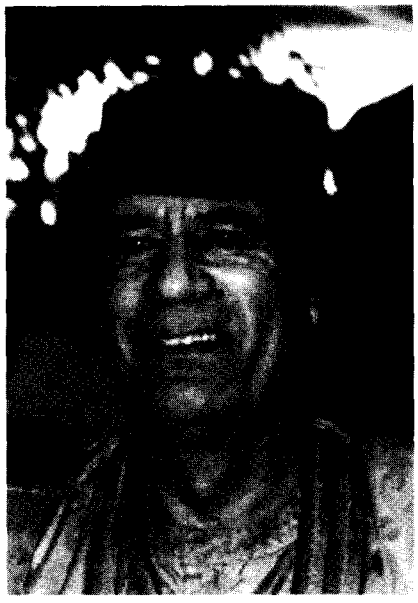

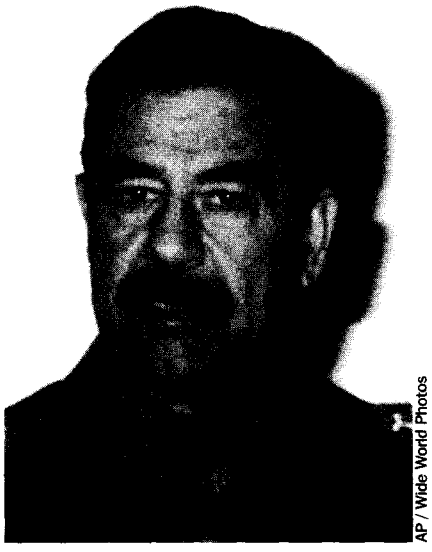

AP / Wide World Photos

Muammar Qaddafi of Libya, Kim Jong Il of North Korea, Saddam Hussein of Iraq.

from the actual conduct of states like North Korea, Iraq, and Iran than from our own self-interested aims is plainly inconsistent with the facts. Whether measured in terms of their repressive rule at home or their execrable conduct abroad, the countries on our rogue list surely belong there. If anything, the roster is too short.

As for the fanciful rendering of the Clinton White House as a purveyor of demonization and militancy, this portrait, too, does not bear scrutiny. Nor, for that matter, does Litwak's claim that the policy has constrained its architects. On the contrary, the current administration has demonstrated a willingness to engage regimes of any stripe, often without conditions and regardless of consequences. It was in line with this policy that, during the past few months alone, the president favored Pakistan with an official visit, though power was just seized there by a military coup; hinted at removing either Libya or North Korea from the State Department's list of terrorism-sponsoring nations; lifted selected sanctions against Iran; and launched an all-out drive to win China entry into the World Trade Organization, its caustic threats to "spill blood" on Taiwan notwithstanding. This pattern, however, seems not to have made the slightest impression on Litwak.

If anything, it is Litwak's own proposals that would constrain U.S. policy, creating an interest in maintaining the status quo and inhibiting our ability to use power for political ends. For such is the author's determination to avoid employing pejorative terms that he appears to eliminate any obligation to link punishment to offense in the conduct of foreign affairs. Indeed, enshrining his suggestions in official policy would merely encourage America's adversaries to conclude that they enjoy more room to maneuver than U.S. rhetoric suggests. In this respect, the test case of engagement with China has been instructive. Far from improving, China's conduct on the international scene has demonstrably worsened under the policy's terms.

Beyond its lack of strategic underpinnings, Litwak's relativistic approach to foreign policy would ensnare the United States in deeply troubling moral complications. Simply put, the international conduct of the United States would become indistinguishable from that of a frankly cynical country like France.

"Outside the American political culture," he observes approvingly of our European friends, "the term rogue state is an alien concept." Hence, it must be an illegitimate concept, an artificial notion that signifies nothing more than our own prejudices. To pretend otherwise is, for the author, simply to engage in an act of willful hubris and arrogance.

Despite its unmistakably postmodern ring, Litwak's contention that there really is no such thing as a rogue state has found a receptive audience in the broader foreign policy community. Indeed, many of its members—both liberal and conservative—have taken to referring to America itself as a rogue state. The United States, they argue, is too naive, too sentimental, too judgmental to decide what sort of behavior merits censure.

True, Litwak is correct to note that the American inclination to view the world in terms of "good and evil" often leads to oversimplification. But it is equally true that evil does exist and that this nation's moralistic impulse, however diminished, frequently gets things exactly right.

America the naive, after all, reigns preeminent. Its creed has been adopted by a majority of states and its ameliorative influence has led to a revolution of international norms—including the expectation that conduct such as that indulged in by rogue regimes will not be countenanced.

The question we should be asking, then, is not whether America should follow in the nonjudgmental footsteps of the secondary European powers Litwak invokes, but rather how best to avoid their fate.

For now, this much at least is evident: Were the United States to heed the author's counsel, not only would the cause of American leadership and world order suffer irreparable harm, but a suitably high price would be exacted from this nation's soul. ♦

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Faux Candor

Al Gore rewrites himself.

BY DEBRA J. SAUNDERS

Since *Earth in the Balance: Ecology and the Human Spirit* appeared in 1992, Al Gore's environmental manifesto has been the source of considerable praise—and considerable ridicule. *Time* hailed it as "a labor of statesmanship" and Bill Moyers praised it as "a powerful summons for the politics of life and hope." But the Bush-Quayle campaign used the book to dub Gore "Ozone Man," and even pundits on the left were appalled at Gore's tendency to issue the most dire of predictions based upon dubious evidence. In an internal memo, a Democratic operative warned that the book would enable Republicans to charge "Al is a radical environmentalist who wants to change the very fabric of America." He was right. The GOP has had a field day warning voters that Gore wants to ban the family car with his "strategic goal of completely eliminating the internal combustion engine over, say, a twenty-five year period."

Earth in the Balance
Ecology and the Human Spirit
A New Edition
by Al Gore
Houghton Mifflin, 416 pp., $26

It is with a gesture of faux candor that Gore ends the foreword to the new edition of *Earth in the Balance* with the page citation to this passage on the internal combustion engine, so "those who want to attack my view" can find the statement without "the trouble of reading the entire book." As he runs for president, the book places Gore in an uncomfortable position. He can't recant what he wrote without critics calling him a flip-flopping panderer. Besides, the man doesn't like to admit that he has altered his stand on anything (as he demonstrated in his refusal to admit his changed position on abortion during the Democratic primary: The vice president seems to think politics means never having to admit that you changed your mind). And even if he tried to distance himself from what he wrote back in 1992, his critics would still wrap his old positions around his tight neck. So he might as well embrace *Earth in the Balance*. Gore was shrewd when he told *Time* recently that "There's not a statement in that book that I don't endorse. Not one."

He makes the same assertion in his new foreword. He writes that he is "proud" that he once called for an end to the combustion engine. He argues the environmental challenge "is more urgent than ever." He cites evidence that shows that global warming is if anything more confirmed as a global threat. And then with the same honesty that he used when he told reporters he doesn't have to answer whether he would pardon Bill Clinton because Clinton himself has said he would not accept a pardon (not true, by the way; it was one of Clinton's lawyers who made that claim), Gore makes this curious statement: "The big lie in this debate is that a good environment is bad economics. That's one of the reasons I wrote *Earth in the Balance*. One of its central themes is that we do not face harsh choices between economic growth and saving the environment."

It makes the reader wonder whether Gore hopes no one does actually take the trouble to read the book. The new foreword is Gore's way of earning praise in 2000 for his fidelity to environmental principles by claiming to stand by everything he wrote, while running headlong from the actual proposals he made in 1992 for new taxes, regulations, and global initiatives. The 1992 edition of *Earth in the Balance* was a call to sacrifice; the 2000 foreword is a claim of comfy changes.

In the book itself he wrote, "Minor shifts in policy, marginal adjustments in ongoing programs, moderate improvements in laws and regulations, rhetoric offered in lieu of genuine change—these are all forms of appeasement, designed to satisfy the public's desire to believe that sacrifice, struggle, and a wrenching transformation of society will not be necessary." Then he compares environmental incrementalists to Neville Chamberlain, adding, "The struggle to save the global environment is in one way much more difficult than the struggle to vanquish Hitler, for this time the war is with ourselves. We are the enemy."

While the 1992 Gore loved nature, his feelings for his fellow man were more nuanced. "The Pacific yew can be cut down and processed to produce a potent chemical, taxol, which offers some promise of curing forms of lung, breast, and ovarian cancer in patients who otherwise would quickly die. It seems an easy choice—sacrifice a tree for a human life—until one learns that three trees must be destroyed for each patient treated." (There may not be "harsh choices" between the environment and the economy, but choosing between trees and people can be a hard call.)

Gore also seems to speak of the impending demise of the planet with a relish only misanthropes and hard-core environmentalists can muster. "The massive clearing of tropical rain forests is, of course, an ecological catastrophe of the first magnitude, beside which the Dust Bowl pales in comparison—not least because the earth could at least recover from the latter in a few generations, whereas the damage from the former could last for tens of millions of years." And "we are carelessly initiating climate changes that could

Debra J. Saunders is a nationally syndicated columnist with the San Francisco Chronicle. *Her book,* The World According to Gore, *will be released shortly by Encounter Books.*

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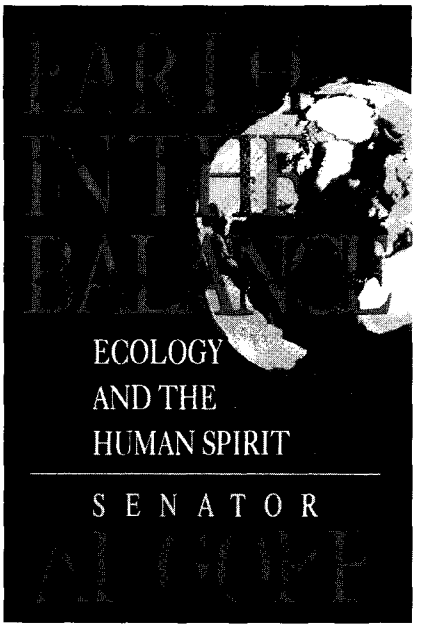
well last for hundreds or thousands of years." Longer than an Ice Age? Millions of years of damage from a thirty-thousand-year-old species? The book has no sense of geological time.

Of course, the earth-lover must warn of global collapse because man has grown too unappreciative of the environment and so needs Gore to return mankind to the proper perspective. He writes of our "dysfunctional civilization" that is "addicted to the consumption of the earth itself." This addiction causes "a psychic numbness," which "prevents us from feeling the pain of our alienation from our world. Both the dysfunctional family and our dysfunctional civilization abhor direct contact with the full and honest experience of life."

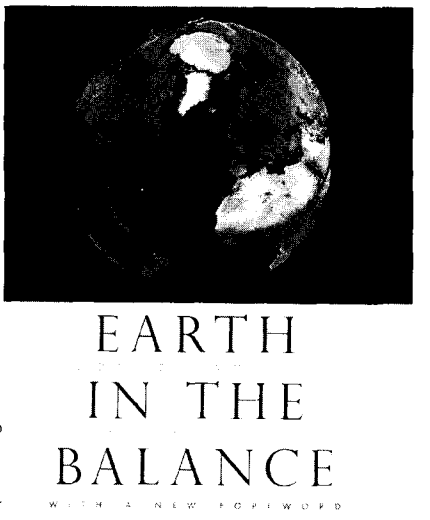
Yes, Gore was in therapy ("family counseling") when he wrote *Earth in the Balance*. His mid-life crisis—or as he calls it, "life change"—occurred after a horrible car accident almost took his six-year-old son's life: "For me, something changed in a fundamental way. I don't think my son's brush with death was solely responsible, although that was the catalyst. But I had also just lost a presidential election; moreover I had just turned forty years old. I was, in a sense, vulnerable to the change that sought me out in the middle of my life."

Left unstated was that Gore's failed presidential bid in 1988—his only electoral loss thus far—must have put him in touch with the strong feeling of anger he felt after the only other defeat he had experienced in such a personal way, when Tennessee voters failed to reelect his father senator in 1970. Young Al had enlisted in the Army and was about to go to Vietnam in an effort to help save his father, and he felt brutally betrayed when voters rejected his father. And so, Gore emerged from his own presidential loss seeing destruction across the global landscape and a need for a prince to save the people from themselves.

Perhaps when Gore writes in his new foreword that "we do not face harsh choices," he means he no longer feels obliged to advocate any if they



The author, his old edition, and his new.



All photos: Houghton Mifflin.

would risk his own political hide. In the book itself, Gore endorsed a huge set of taxes to discourage the harvesting of natural resources, as well as energy consumption. "In fact, almost every poll shows Americans decisively rejecting higher taxes on fossil fuels, even though that proposal is one of the logical first steps in changing policies in a manner consistent with a more responsible approach to the environment. . . . I have found that voters are willing to go much further to meet the crisis than most politicians assume possible—but they are waiting for the leadership."

Voters will have to continue to wait. As Bill Clinton's vice president and as a candidate for president in his own right, Gore has distanced himself from even a modest energy tax hike—though he writes that without stern measures his own children could be subjected to "a decade without a winter," while rising sea levels could lead to "unprecedented" numbers of refugees in Third World countries.

But then, that is Gore's relation to environmentalism. In *Earth in the Balance*, he found a winning formula:

First, make gloom-and-doom predictions that justify great changes in taxation and regulation so that a green messiah can remake the world into a gentler planet. This gives a candidate credentials as a better human being than his rivals and wins votes among those who consider themselves environmentalists.

Second, don't actually endorse a single tax touted in the book. Call for tough measures, but depend on the media not to ask you what those measures may be. Don't put a price tag on any reforms, but tell people that all these regulations will actually save money. That will let big corporate donors understand that they have nothing to fear from your candidacy, because you are not willing to risk anything for your reelection.

Third, tell everyone you are proud of your book. To show you mean it, bring up that old saw about getting rid of the combustion engine. Win points for candor. ♦

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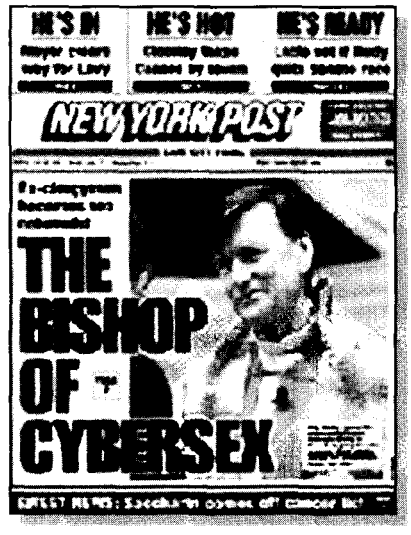
BISHOP TO WRITE CYBERSEX COLUMN

By ROD DREHER



JOHN SHELBY SPONG, recently retired Episcopal bishop of Newark, is not letting the grass grow under his feet.

He's reinventing himself as the bishop of cybersex.

Spong, ever the controversialist, has agreed to write a column about religion and sexuality for ThePosition.com, a Manhattan-based sex Web site launching June 5.

His first piece asks whether the Ten Commandments - which he once described as "immoral" - are sexually biased against women.

Jack Heidenry, a former Penthouse and Maxim editor who heads the new site, described ThePosition.com as "a magazine that covers sexuality from top to bottom."

There will be nude pictures on the site, and porn star/producer Candida Royale will be among its columnists. Yet Heidenry insists that the site, which is owned by the yet-to-open Museum of Sex, will "not be hard-core. It's a very upscale magazine."

Of course. Whoever heard of an Episcopal bishop slumming in louche quarters?

Spong, 69, who is spending the spring at Harvard, confirmed his participation in the site yesterday, but said he didn't want to comment further....

the weekly Standard
May 29, 2000

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Revisiting Ronald Reagan on the Drug War

Joseph D. McNamara is a research fellow, Hoover Institution; former director of crime analysis, New York City Police Department; and former chief of police, San Jose, California.

In a 1999 essay Richard Allen, who had been President Ronald Reagan's security adviser, told how the former president was outraged when he watched two East German policemen stop a man at gunpoint at the Berlin Wall and poke around in his shopping bags. The president was so disturbed by the policemen viewing ordinary people as suspect that he ultimately (and immortally) advised Soviet premier Mikhail Gorbachev to "tear down this wall!"

What a pity that the man who did so much to end the totalitarian Soviet state and who spoke so persuasively in favor of individual freedom did not witness four plainclothes cops in the Bronx fire forty-one shots, killing twenty-year-old Amadou Diallo. The East German man had ultimately been sent on his way; the unarmed Diallo, who had committed no crime, was killed in his own hallway.

What would President Reagan have thought of the Los Angeles Police pointing shotguns at minority youngsters suspected of belonging to gangs, forcing them to kneel with hands behind their heads and illegally searching them? Or of Officer Rafael Perez and his partner, who, according to Perez, handcuffed and shot unarmed nineteen-year-old Francisco Ovando, then planted a sawed-off rifle on the youngster who had never previously been arrested? Francisco Ovando was not only crippled for life but received a twenty-three-year prison sentence. He was released after three years only because rogue cop Perez finally disclosed the frame-up to try to lighten his own sentence for stealing drugs.

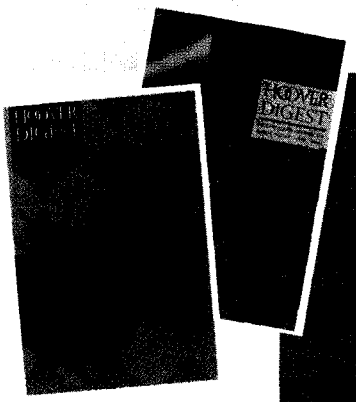
What if Ronald Reagan, who led the country in a revolution against government intrusion, had seen the police SWAT team gunning down rancher Donald Scott at dawn in his own kitchen? If cops had found marijuana on the ranch, the ranch would have been sold and the police agencies would have split millions of dollars. Scott, totally innocent, died in a hail of police bullets when he picked up his legally owned shotgun to defend his family against what he believed to be a gang of robbers.

Reagan detractors say that he would have shrugged off the many thousands of such law enforcement atrocities committed in the name of the drug war, as many of Reagan's supporters now shrug them off. People point out that he had declared drugs a danger to national security. Yet we should remember that the former president renounced his early support for big government and went on to become the icon of conservatism.

It is easy to imagine Ronald Reagan viewing the unintended consequences of the drug war and saying, with the same vision and strength, **"We can't make war against our own people and our own civil liberties. There has to be a better way to discourage drug use."**

— Joseph D. McNamara

Paid for by the Hoover Institution, Stanford University.



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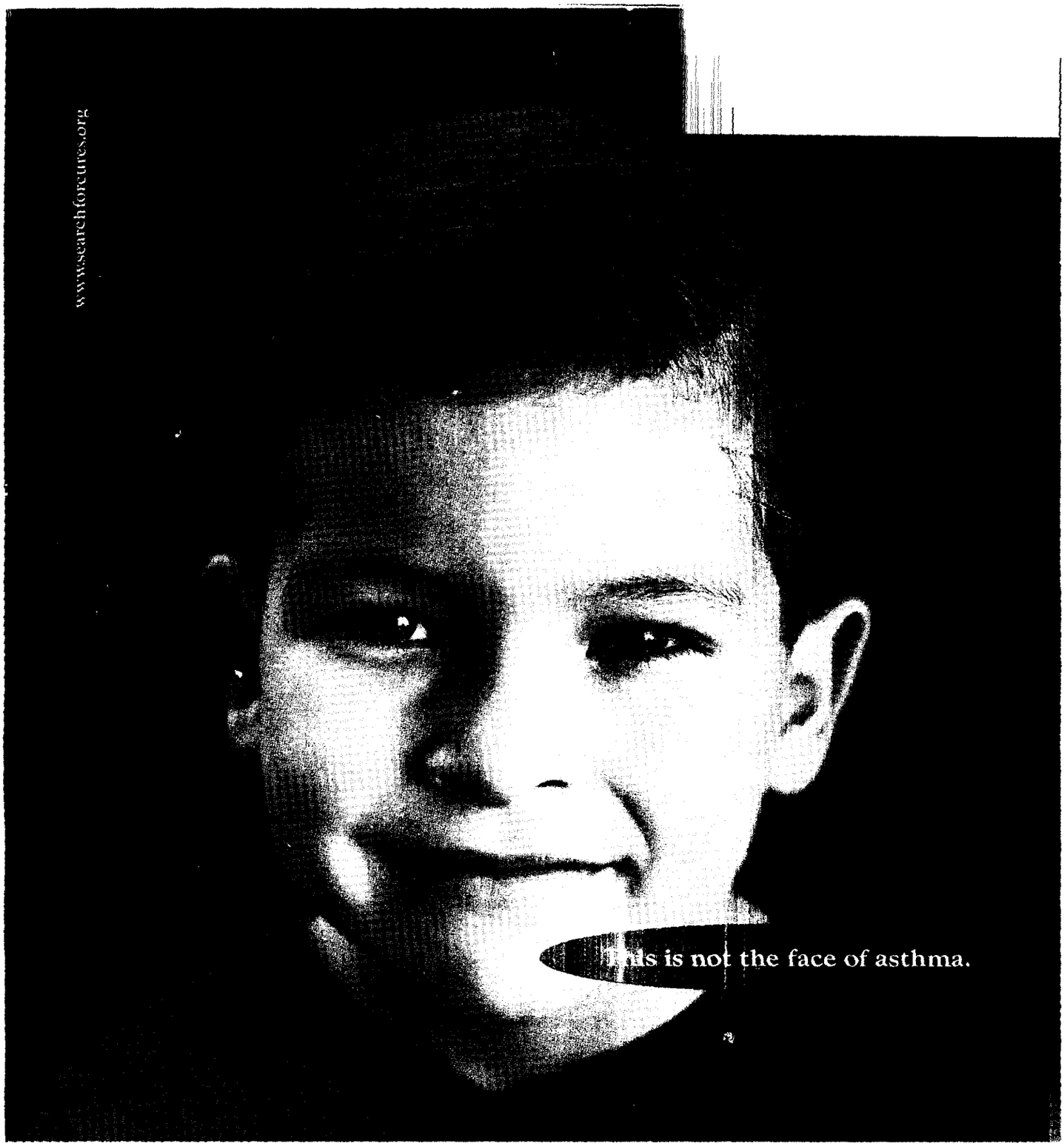

It's the face of Jeremy Gutierrez — skateboarder, bike rider, rollerblader, kid. It wasn't always that way. Like five million other children with asthma, Jeremy was forced to live an overly protected life due to fear of attacks. And when attacks did come, they often meant being rushed away from friends and family into the fear and trauma of the emergency room. Today, America's pharmaceutical companies are discovering medicines that help kids like Jeremy stay healthy, stay in school, and stay out of hospitals. Pharmaceutical company researchers are working hard to discover breakthroughs that will help make many illnesses and diseases a thing of the past and bring more patients new hope for a better tomorrow. Thanks to new medicines discovered by these researchers, today, Jeremy has a life like any normal six-year-old — a life full of curiosity, full of wonder and full of health.

America's Pharmaceutical Companies

Leading the way in the search for cures

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